

A DECADE of  
**CAVEATS**  
TO THE  
People of England,  
OF  
General Use in All Times, but most  
seasonable in These.

- As having {
- A Tendency to the satisfying such as are not content with the Present Government, as it is by Law establish'd.
  - An Aptitude to the Settling the Minds of such as are but Seekers and Erraticks in Religion.
  - An Aim at the Uniting of our Protestant-Dissenters in Church and State.

WHEREBY

The worst of All Conspiracies lately rais'd against *Both*, may be made the *greatest Blessing*, which could have happen'd to *either* of them.

To which is added an APPENDIX

In order to the Conviction of those Three Enemies to the Deity: The *Atheist*, The *Infidel*, and The *Setter up of Science* to the Prejudice of *Religion*.

By *THOMAS PIERCE D.D.* Domestick Chaplain to His Majesty, and Dean of *Sarum*.

*Partim Jussu, partim Permissu Superiorum.*

L O N D O N,

Printed for *Richard Davis* Bookseller in *Oxford*. 1679.





*Charles Lord Maynard*

The AUTHOR'S  
PARÆNESIS  
TO THE  
READER,  
Touching his  
PRINCIPAL DESIGN  
In the following  
CAVEATS.

Christian Reader,

**B**Eing passionately desirous (as by  
my Calling I am bound, and so  
with every man's Pardon I am allow'd,)  
to do as much as in me lies for *the con-*  
*verting of a Sinner from the Error of his*  
*way, whereby to save a Soul from Death,*  
*and cover a Multitude of Sins,* I pen'd  
a 2 the

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the following Discourses as well for private as publick Use. For the private use first of some in the world whom they have satisfied, and (by the Blessing of God) have had a good effect on. For the more publick use next of many Noble and Learned Auditors, whose Judgments as well as Qualities being superiour to mine own, have induced me to permit them to pass from the Pulpit to the Press, as conceiving that by their being in common use, they would be also more commonly and truly usefull. What success they may find, God onely knows, who alone can command it, as He sees fit. But I am conscious to my self of none other than the sincerest and purest Aims, at the Glory of God, and the Good of Men, from the beginning to the end of my whole Performance.

If

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If in the Conduct of my Discourses I shall seem to some Readers to have been in some places too sharp, or pungent, I have This at least to say in my Justification, or Excuse, that the sole End and Motive of my severest Argumentations, has been onely to *compel* them to be as happy as my self, in the Communion I enjoy with the Church of *England*. As God himself is expressed, by way of Parable, to send his Servant into *the High ways and Hedges, to call the poor, the maim'd, the halt, and the blind, and compell them to come in* (to his heavenly Feast,) *that his House may be full*; so I am earnest (if I am able) to drive Dissenters out of their *Hedges and High-ways of Schism and Disobedience*, into the *True House of God*, and the *Lord's own Table*. The whole Design of my *sharpness*, either in *Argument*,

Luk 14. 23.

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or *Exprefſion*, is by *Reason*, and *Scripture*, and by *Scriptural Examples* and *Comminations*, to force our ſeparating Brethren into *Unity*, and *Embraces*, and *Friendſhip* with us. God is my Witneſs, I look upon them with Bowels of *Tenderneſs* and *Compaſſion*, (not with *Hatred*, or *Contempt*,) as *Poor*, and *Maim'd*, and *Halt*, and *Blind*; as lying in *Hedges* of *Aberration*, and in the *High-ways* of *Corab*, which lead directly both to *Temporal*, and into the danger of *Endleſs Ruin*: And I would (if it were poſſible) ἀναγκάζειν εἰσελθεῖν, even *compel them to come in*, and partake with us equally of That *Cæleſtial Entertainment* we commonly call *The Lord's Supper*; that ſo as well *The Lord's Houſe*, as the *Lord's Table* may be full of them. We abominate nothing more than ſuch an uncharitable *Monopolizing* both of  
Salvation

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Salvation and the means of it, as Some ( we read ) have been guilty of; and do love *Them* ſo heartily who do as heartily hate *Us* and our *Way of Worſhip*, that if it were in our choiſe and power, we would not ingroſs the rich Reward of *orderly Walking* unto *our ſelves*, but would make them partakers together with us. We would not *Pray*, or hear *Sermons*, or communicate in *Sacraments*, or might we have our moſt ardent *Wiſhes*, we would not go to *Heaven* without them. And it is with *This* Charity that I endeavour in one Diſcourſe to prove our *Separatiſts* have *None*, ſo long as they abide in their State of *Schiſm*.

I know there is a great Difference, betwixt the *Weaker*, and *Wilfuller* ſort of Diſſenters. Some of the former do not *know*, and *None* of them probably

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bably do *consider*, how the *Pharisees* had their *Name* from their *Separation*, which arose from their *Opinion* that they were *Better than other Men*. Much less yet do they *imagine*, by what sort of *Men* they are *invisibly overacted*. They little think that they are *Journey-men* to their own worst *Enemies* of each *Extreme*, who *drive a Trade* of *Divisions* in *Church and State*, whereby to sacrifice to the *Lust of Revenge*, or *Avarice*; and that *They* who do not *intend* the very *least* publick *Mischief* by their *Dissentions*, do (before *They* are aware) carry on *Their Designs* who intend the *greatest*. Now there is nothing more *dishonorable* to the *Nature* of *Man*, or more to the *shame* of his *Understanding*, than to be made another *Man's Property*, another *Man's Instrument*, or *Tool*, even without his own  
*Know-*

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*Knowledge*, and against his own *Will*, as well as *Interest*. And if by any thing I have urged in the Discourses of this Book, Persons *abus'd* and *over-reach'd* by men *ingeniously wicked* (as *Innocent Eve* by the *cunning Serpent*;) shall be made sensible of their *Wrongs*, and as well of their private as publick *Dangers*; I shall esteem it a great *Reward* to have been *serviceable* to the more *Tender* and the more *Treatable* Dissenters, though I sustain the *Ill-will* of the more *Obdurate*.

If any Reader shall Object, (after his perusal of All that follows,) that I have shew'd as much Severity to certain *Jesuited Protestants*, as to the *Jesuites themselves* of the Church of *Rome*, and in one place have parallel'd the Dismal 30 of *January* 1648. with the 5 of *November* 1605, my Answer is at  
b hand,



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hand, and 'tis plainly this: that the Keeping out of Popery, with all its Plots and Conspiracies of every kind, stands not so much in a *Discovery* and *Confutation* of its *Errors*, (though That has evermore been done, and is still in doing,) as in an effectual *Disappointment* and *defeating* of its *Designs*. The great and *general Design* of the Popish Factioners and Factors, (I mean the *Jesuits* most especially,) is to *debilitate* by *dividing*, and to *distract* by *discontenting* the People of *England*; and by That Artifice, (having found by long Experience, They cannot well hurt us without our Help,) to make the Protestants Themselves who would have Popery *kept out* with Both their Hands, most Instrumental to *bring it in* by Head and Shoulders. All I say against the Practices of our *Jesuited Protestants*, is  
in

\* *Habemus enim & Nos Jesuitas, inquietabat Rex Jacobus. Isaacus Caesabono dicuntur*  
Οἱ ἐν τοῖς  
ἡμετέροις  
Ἰνσ. πρὸς  
Επιστ. 116.

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in Displeasure to The *Jesuits*, who  
*drive them on*. And were I to labour  
for my life against the Inroads or  
Growths of *Popery*, and in prevention  
of the Conspiracies which come from  
*Rome*, I would make it my whole In-  
deavour, both by Menaces, and Per-  
swasions, by Terrors, and Intreaties,  
by sense of Interest, and Honour, and  
Shame it self, by all the Means I could  
use, and all the Arguments I could  
urge, to convince and convert our Eng-  
lish Protestant Dissenters, and make  
them *All meet as One* in the Church of  
*England*. If 'tis *Their* Master-piece to  
*divide* us, it should be *Ours* to be *uni-*  
*ted*. And *Now*, if *Ever*. Else in  
vain do we strive to confute their *Er-*  
*rors*, though we do it never so well,  
whilst torn in pieces among our selves  
we commit the *grossest Error* (in point

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of *Policy* and *Prudence*) to be imagin'd. It should therefore (in my opinion) be the Ambition of us All, who are heartily the Sons of the Church of *England*, to prevail from All Topicks with Protestant Sectaries amongst us, (who do agree with us already in the publick Profession of being *Protestants*, and being equally *averse* to the *Church* of *Rome*,) to *lay aside* their Animosities, if not to *bury* them *for ever* in the same *Church-yard*; to acquiese in one Government by Law establish'd; to submit their *single* Judgments to the *united* ones of their Superiours; to sacrifice *Private* Discontents to *Publick* Interest, and to be *as a City which is at unity in it self*; to consider that as the Laws would be otherwise than they are, if their *Governours* were as *They*, so if *They* were as their *Governours*, the Laws would  
still

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still be as they are by their own Contrivance; to keep in mind that as of Mortals, who are but Men on this side heaven, *He* is reckon'd to be the *Best* who has *fewest Faults*, not *He* who has *none* in a State of Frailty, so of all Governments upon Earth, *That* ought to pass for the most *Perfect*, (as well in respect of its legislative, as of its executive Administrations,) which is subject unto the *fewest* and *most supportable Imperfections*.

Add to This the Consideration, how many *Rebellions* and *Conjurations* rais'd by *Christians* (so called) against their *Governours*, have brought *The Profession* into an *Hatred* with *Jews* and *Gentiles* ever since; and tempted many even *at home* into This passionate Imprecation, *Sint Anima nostræ cum Philosophis*. Nor can we say who were the

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worse, of men pretending to *Christianity*, They who did *execute* what they intended on the 30 of *January*, or They who *Intended* onely to execute on the 5 of *November*, the barbarous Murther and Subversion of King and Kingdom. And if our present *Dissenters* (such I mean of their Number as mean the Best,) would but impartially *consider*, or sufficiently *compare*, as well the *Principles*, and the *Parties*, as the *Projects* *Themselves*, which Those Two Days have made so signal, I cannot chuse but believe They would abominate them *alike*; or the *Later* perhaps the *more*, for the Infamy Then brought on the *English Name*. I know not whether I shall be *able*, but I am *willing* to do them Service, by *undeceiving* and *disabusing* them in All the Caveats which ensue. Being as hopefull our *Common Enemies* will

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will in Time make us *Friends*, as I am sure our *Common Dangers* ought to make us all *intent* on our *Common Safety*. This they *will* and *must* do, in case we will but permit our selves, either in Piety, or in Prudence, to be provoked by our Enemies to *Æmulation*. For if All sorts of *Papists*, even the *Sorbonists*, and the *Jesuits*, the *Dominicans*, and the *Franciscans*, the Professors of the *Gallican* and *Spanish Churches*, however differing in Opinions, and burning in Hatreds of one another, do yet agree against the *Protestants*, and in the same Church of *Rome*, as much as *Caiphas* a *Jew*, and *Pontius Pilate* a *Gentile*, did Both agree against *Jesus Christ*; what can hinder All sorts of *Protestants*, All the *English* ones especially, (however divided in some Opinions and Disaffections to one another, as much perhaps

as

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as even the *Molinists* and the *Janfenists* Themselves,) from meeting together and agreeing in the same Church of *England*, whose Reformation is made Authentick by the Highest Authority under Heaven? Especially when their *Agreement* is a most *Necessary Preservative* of those *Four* things which are *dearest* to them, their *Religion*, their *Liberties*, their *Livelihoods*, and their *Lives*? What can hinder them from converting the most Inhumane Combination of our blood-thirsty Enemies, into an Excellent Security against it self? or from making our remaining and yet present *Dangers* become the most *Instrumental* to our *Escape*?

There is a trite and stale objection, against the King, and the Bishops, and against all Inferiour Men of the Church of *England*, that they are *Popishly affected*,



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fect<sup>d</sup>, if not a kind of *Cassandrian Papists*. And This Objection or Calumny, how *weak* soever, has yet been strong enough to be *mischievous* unto a world of *well-meaning*, but *weaker* Brethren; although it has ever been *consulted* by all the *Barbarous Combinations*, and *Diabolical Conspiracies*, against the Fathers and the Sons of the Church of *England*, from the Days of *Queen Elizabeth*, to *These* we live in. For if there is in any of us such a *Tincture* of Popery, or of Papistical Inclination, as the *Jesuited Papists* have taught our *Jesuited Protestants* to say and publish, why should the *Emissaries of Rome* be more industriously intent upon *our* Destruction, (for being men of the *Church of England*,) than upon the Extirpation of all *other* Protestants in the World? Is it not because the *Church of England*



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is still the *Ornament*, and the *Apology*, the *Support*, and the *Protection*, of All the Protestant Churches beyond Sea throughout the World? Is it not that *foreign Protestants* cannot be rooted out *with Ease*, or but persecuted *with Safety*, whilst there is a *Church of England*, to stand as a Rampire in the Way between *Them* and *Ruin*? Whereas destroy or extinguish the Church of *England*, and All the Reformed Churches abroad will fall to *Ruin of Themselves*. If *Real Miracles* are not *ceased*, (as some say they are, and some that they are *not*,) The Church of *England's Preservation* (and of late more than ever,) is the best *Argument* I can think of, whereby to *prove* the *Continuance* of them. O that our *Separatists* were wise! that they understood *This*! that they would  
but

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but consider That Hand from Heaven, by which the chief Protestant King, and the chief Protestant Kingdom of all the World, and the chief Protestant Church which is the Security of the Rest, are yet *alive* at This Day, to own and Honour their Deliverer, and to be *practically* thankfull for their Deliverance.

One thing more I have to say, in This *Monition* to the Reader, concerning both the *Nature*, and the *Liberty* of a Man's *Conscience*; which He who offers to *invade*, and so to *violate*, does attempt to *make a Breach* on the *Gates of Heaven*. (As the Emperor \**Maximilian* thought good to word it.) Only 'tis every Man's Concernment to learn exactly *what it is*, wherein the *Nature* of a Man's *Conscience*, and the just *Liberty* is to *consist*. I give a Caveat touching the first, in the

\* Hujus sententiam Annales Hanc referunt, nullum enormis peccatum esse posse, quam in Conscientias exercere vel le imperium. Nam Conscientiis imperare, est Arcem Cæli invadere.

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Third Sermon following; and touching the second in the Fourth. To each of w<sup>ch</sup> if our *Dividers* will but deliberately advert, They will be much better Subjects both to *God* and the *King*, than they are at present; and we who are Lovers of the Government by Law establish'd, shall have the fairer Quarter from them for That Conjunction. *This* (one would think) should be agreed to, even by Men of All Parties: that if the *Conscienc*es of *Some* (as *Some* do use the word *Conscience*) contend for a *Liberty* to *resist*, or at least to *contradict*, and to *defame* the Laws in force, sure the *Conscienc*es of *others* may have a *Liberty* to *obey* them without offense. Which yet has been envied, or deny'd us, we know by *whom*. If, where the matter is *indifferent*, or barely *lawfull*, All the *immediate Laws* of *Men* are also the *mediate Laws* of *God*, by being

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ing enacted by That Authority, which God has *enacted* we shall *obey*; and if it is a prime part of That *Christian Liberty*, *wherewith Christ has made us free*, to *submit our selves* (with *S. Peter*) to every *Ordinance of man*, and to do it for the *Lord's sake*, (as *S. Peter* bids us,) 'Tis equally strange, and unexcusable, that They who call it most falsely their *Christian Liberty*, to *despise Dominion*, and *speakevil of Dignities*, to live in Schism and Disobedience to Laws in force, should seek to defraud us of That *genuine* and *True Christian Liberty*, The Liberty to *obey such as are over us in the Lord*, and such as *\*Watch for our Safeties*, whilst we are *Sleeping*. In this Grand Doctrine of *Jesus Christ*, the Doctrine of *submission to every Ordinance of man*, by way of Climax and Gradation from the bottom to the Top of All Authority upon Earth, (from

Gal. 5. 1.

Heb. 13. 17.

1 Pet. 2. 13.

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the Constable or the Tithing-man who labours at the Plough, to Him who sits upon the Throne as the Supreme Resort of Justice, and to whose Determination the last Appeal lies, ) we have a *Principle of Unity*, which either will bind up all our Breaches, or else will make our Divisions innocent. For our Judgements all meeting in This One Point, (as very easily they may, and unavoidably they must, if we do heartily and truly believe the Gospel,) All our *other* Disagreements in point of Opinion or Perswasion will not be publickly *Inconvenient*, much less *Per-nicious* : because when *Inbred Insurrections* are made impossible, (as they are in the Case premised,) no *Invasions* from *without* can ever hurt us. On the other side I cannot forbear to prophecy, (wishing my Prophecy may

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may be false, as it is modest and but conditional, ) that if we fix not on some *Expedient* whereby to agree among our selves, ( nor can I imagin any one likelier than the Great Principle of obedience to God's Anointed, whose Life is every day endanger'd for his Adherence to *our* Religion, ) we shall not have a way left to keep out a *foreign Jurisdiction*, or to prevent its coming in with a foreign Force.

I have the more reason to hope, the greater reason I have to pray, that my Caveats may find their Readers in so much Temper as to *weigh* the several Arguments made use of in This Conjunction, which are in hopes to *outweigh* whatsoever witty Malice may urge against them. And that This may be an Instance of God Almighty's  
great

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great Mercy to This most *coveted*,  
and *indanger'd*, and (not despised, but)  
*Envied* Land, is so far the Hope; as  
it is the Prayer of

The Reader's well-meaning

and faithfull Servant

*T. P.*

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A SEASONABLE  
**CAVEAT**

Against the Dangers of  
**CREDULITY**  
IN OUR  
Trusting the **SPIRITS**  
Before we Try them;

Delivered in a  
**SERMON**  
BEFORE THE  
**KING**  
AT  
**WHITE-HALL**

On the First Sunday in *February*, 167<sup>8</sup>/<sub>9</sub>.

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By *THOMAS PIERCE* D. D. Domestick  
Chaplain to His Majesty, and Dean of *Salum*.

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**MDCLXXIX.**



( 1 )

A  
S E R M O N  
P R E A C H E D before the  
K I N G.

I JOHN 4. 1.

*But try the Spirits whether they be  
of God.*

§ 1. **T**H E R E are Multitudes of De-  
ceivers in these our last and  
worst Times, by way of *Antidote* unto whose  
*Venom* These words of S. *John* are a good  
*Provision*. And however they are *numerous*,  
I think they may fall under *two general*  
*Heads*. Some are so *credulous* as to be-  
lieve *every Spirit*; and some so *Atheisticall*,  
as to believe *none at all*. Both are *Enemies*

*Vide Haresin  
Jenxuanam  
apud Maffi-  
um, l. 16.*

to Religion, though *not Both alike*. For though the *first* are *bad enough*, the *last* are very much *worse*. The *first* are *Meteors* in Religion, expressed to us in Scripture by *Clouds without water*, and *wandering Stars*; such as are *carried to and fro with every Wind of false Doctrine*; men so *unlearned* and so *unstable*, so in love with *New Light*, and so *given to change*, that not contented with one or two, (though the best and soundest,) *they heap up Teachers unto themselves*; and by the *Novelty* of the Doctrine putting an estimate or value on him that brings it, they are easily made *Profelytes* to every *New Prophet* who next bespeaks them; little considering with S. *John*, (in the next words after my Text,) that *there are many false Prophets* (*many even in His Time*, and many *more* sure in *ours*,) *gone out into the World*. The *second* sort of Enemies (which are the *worst* too) are the Disciples of the Book which is call'd *Leviathan*; the greatest *Monster* in all the World, excepting onely *the Authour of it*. For if the perfectest Definition of *Man as Man*, is to be *Animal*  
Reli-

*Religiosum*, which still includes *Rationale*, and therefore makes the most exact Definition, (as many great and good Writers have very rationally esteem'd it;) then He must certainly be a \**Monster*, more properly than a *Man*, who is so *destitute* of *Reason*, as wholly to be *void* of *Religion* too. And for any one to Teach, (as the *Monster* of *Malmesbury* has been permitted to doe in Print,) that there is *no Spirit at all*, or that there is *no incorporeal Substance*, (two Expressions of the same Thing,) what is it but to *pluck up all Religion by the Root*? 'Tis publickly to set up a *School of Atheism*. For *God* (if any thing) *is a Spirit*; not for *This* reason onely, because our Apostle *S. John* affirms it, (whom the *Hobbists* will not believe;) but for this *other* reason also, (which even our *Hobbists* cannot but yield to,) that, supposing a *God* there is, (or that 'tis but possible for him to be,) He must be *Infinite*, and *Indivisible*; and yet, we know, He can be *neither*, if He is any way *Corporeal*. For All *Corporeal* things have *Parts*, and so by consequence are *divisible*, and so

\* Vid. Arrian. Epist.  
l. 3. c. 29.  
⊙ L. 4. c. 5.  
Plotin. Enn.  
3. l. 2.

Joh. 4. 24.

\* p. 214.

by consequence are *finite*. And for God to be *finite*, or *divisible*, is for God *not to be God*; the worst and grossest of Contradictions. From whence it follows unavoidably, that for any one to *teach*, and to teach in *publick*, (not publicly from the *Pulpit*, but much *more* publicly from the *Press*,) that an *Incorporeal Substance* is in it self a *Contradiction*, (the Positive Doctrine of the \* *Leviathan*,) is publicly to open a *School of Atheism*: It being *publickly to teach There is no Spirit*, and (by a Consequence unavoidable) *There is no God*. For every thing that is, is either an *Accident*, or a *Substance*. (What is *neither*, is *not*.) And every *Substance* (a *nobler* sort of *Being* than any *Accident* can be) is either *Corporeal*, or *Incorporeal*. That denominates a *Body*, and This a *Spirit*. To say that *God* is the *former*, implies the horridest *Contradiction*; (as hath been shewn;) and so He *must* be the *latter*, by undeniable Consecution. To say, *He is not a Spirit*, or *not an Immaterial Substance*, is neither better nor worse then to say, *He is not*. It is to say, *There is no such Thing*.

§ 2. A.

§ 2. Against the dangerous Contagion of the premised *two Extremes*, *S. John* in this Text has timely given us *Two Caveats*; one *express'd*, and another *imply'd*. First, 'tis *express'd* in plain terms, that, seeing *many false Prophets* (or false *Pretenders to the Spirit*) are gone out into the World, we are bound, for that Reason, *not to believe Every Spirit*. Next, 'tis as evidently *imply'd*, (as if it were expressed in words at length,) that *though Many Prophets are False, we must not thence reckon that None are True*: as though many Lines are crooked, we must not thence argue that none are *strait*; seeing every *crooked* Line must needs presuppose and imply a *strait* one. Nor may we sottishly disbelieve *the Spirit of Holiness and Truth*, for fear of believing with too much ease a *Spirit of Error and Uncleaness*. But as my Text is in the middle between an important *Dehortation*, [*Believe not every Spirit,*] and as important a *Reason* of it, [*for many false Prophets are gone out into the World:*] so our Course is to be steer'd in a middle way, betwixt the Scylla of



of *Credulity*, and the *Charybdis* of *Unbelief*. We must *examin* all *Pretenders*, and *try* of what sort they are. We must get a *Lapis Lydius*, whereby to learn the true difference betwixt the *two sorts of Spirits* in the first Verse of this Chapter, *the Spirit of Truth*, and *the Spirit of Errour*: or, (to exprels it without the *Metonymie* which our Apostle here useth,) betwixt a *True*, and *False Prophet*; betwixt *a man of God*, and a *Dreamer of Dreams*; betwixt a *Theopneust*, and a *Dæmoniack*; betwixt a reall *Possessor* of Divine Revelations, and a phantastick *Pretender* to them. For as there were Prophets in the *Old Testament*, both *True* and *False*, so are there also in the *New*. As there were *Spirits* under the *Law*, too many to be *good*, so there are also under the *Gospel*. There was in That a *familiar Spirit*, (*Lev. 20. 27.*) a *lying Spirit*, (*1 King. 22. 22.*) and a *Spirit of Perverseness*, (*Isa. 19. 14.*) There is in This a *foul Spirit*, a *deaf and dumb Spirit*, (*Mar. 9. 25.*) a *Spirit of Errour and of Delusion*, (*2 Theff. 2. 11. 1 Joh. 4. 6.*) a *Spirit of Slumber*, (*Rom. 11. 8.*) Still the more and

\* 1 King.

13. 1.

\* Deut. 13.

1, 3.

\* 2 Pet. 1.

21. & ch. 2.

27. 1.

and the *worse* the unclean Spirits are, the greater *need* we have to *Try* them. And though there are also as many *Good* Spirits, as there are *Angels* who *never fell*; yet *all* their *Goodness* is but *derivative*, from the *one Spirit of God*, who is *God the Spirit*. To *Him* are ascribed the famous *Gifts*, *1 Cor. 12. 4.* And amongst all the severall *Gifts* wrought by *one and the same Spirit*, the *Discerning of Spirits* is worthily reckon'd to be a chief, (*v. 10.*) Which Gift of *Discerning* 'twixt good and bad Spirits, (as all the rest,) *The Spirit of God divides to every man severally as He will*, (*v. 11.*) to some in a *greater*, and to some in a *lesser* measure. And in this Gift *S. Peter* did very much excell *S. Philip*. (For so 'tis obvious to collect from the *8<sup>th</sup>*. of the *Acts*, by comparing the *13<sup>th</sup>*. with the *23<sup>th</sup>*. verse.)

§ 3. Now whatever can be meant by the *Subjects of Triall* we are to make, whether Churches or Church-men, whether Prophecies or Prophets, whether Doctrins or Doctors, whether Inspirations or men Inspir'd, or every one of these equally; however *different* they may be, or *inconsistent* with one another; 'tis plain they *All* pretend *alike*

unto the same Spirit of God. And therefore ~~do not~~ <sup>Try</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>prove</sup> them, (says our Apostle,) whether they are what they pretend: whether really they are Gold, or do but eminently glister: whether they speak by Commission, and as the Oracles of God, or onely run ere they are sent, inspir'd by Avarice, and Ambition, and by the Impulse of the Devil: whether they teach the sound Doctrins of Christ's Apostles and of his Church, whose Faith and Doctrins we are to follow; or are but some of the foolish Prophets (in the 13<sup>th</sup>. of Ezekiel) who follow their own Spirit, and prophesie out of their own Hearts; are like the Foxes in the Deserts, have spoken Vanity, and seen Lies, saying, The Lord saith, and the Lord hath not sent them. In any case we must try them, of what sort they are.

Ezek. 13.  
2, 3, 4,  
6, 8, &c.

§ 4. Nor must we onely try Them; but we must also try the Rule by which they All are to be tried. For severall Tests and Rules of Triall (who are true or false Teachers, and which Doctrins are right or wrong,) have been lately set up to the hurt of Souls, by the Two sorts of Enemies whereof I spake in the beginning; to wit, the Pretenders to Enthu-

*Enthusiasm, and the Disciples of the Levathan.* The first of these will allow of no other Test, than the Sturdiness and Strength of their own Perswasion, which it is their will and pleasure to call *The Testimony within them.* And by running in a Circle they grow so giddy, that the longer we Catechize, the more we lose them. And 'tis worthy to be observ'd, how they wrest and misapply the Word of Life to their Destruction. For, If we ask how they know they have a Testimony within them from God the Holy Ghost; *We know it* (say they) *by This, that \* God hath given us of his Spirit.* If we ask how they know that He hath given them of his Spirit; *We know it* (they say) *by This, that \* we cannot sin.* If we ask how they know that they cannot sin; their Answer is, *\* We are born of God.* If we ask how they know This; *We know it,* (they will answer) *because we have \* a new Name given us, which no man knows but He that hath it.* If we ask how they know of a new Name given them; they will answer, *We know it by that \* Spirit which dwelleth in us.* If we ask how they know the Spirit of Truth from the Spirit of Errour; their Answer is still at hand, (and still out of the Scriptures,)

\* 1 Joh. 4. 13.

\* 1 Joh. 3. 9.

\* Ibid.

\* Rev. 2. 17.

\* Rom. 8. 11.

1 Joh. 4. 6.

\* Rom. 8.  
16.

1 Joh. 5. 10.

ver. 9.

Leviath.  
p. 36. & 159.

Ibid. p. 232.

*He that knoweth God beareth us, and he that is not of God beareth not us.* If we ask them for a *Witness* whereby to prove it; \**The Spirit* (their Answer is) *beareth witness with our Spirits.* If we bid them *produce* their *Witness*; *He that believeth* (they will say) *hath the witness in himself.* If we call for any *Witness of men*; they tell us, *The Witness of God is greater.* Thus they argue by their *Circular and Identical* way of discourse, [ *They have the Holy Spirit of God, because they are (forthwith) assured; and assured of it they are, because of the Spirit which dwelleth in them.* ] So strongly does *the Spirit of Perverseness* shew it self in such as are *delivered up to believe a Lie.* ( For that is sometimes the case, 2 *Thess.* 2. 11. )

The *other* Enemies of Religion, ( who are withall by much the *worst,* ) in a *derision* and *contempt* of *supernatural Revelation*, will have no better *Test* of *true* and *false* Prophets, or of *right* and *wrong* Doctrins, than the *Warranty* and *Allowance* of the *Sovereign Powers*, in every *Kingdom* and *Commonwealth*, of whatsoever Denomination throughout the world. Which Position of the *Leviathan*, ( fetcht as 'tis from *Japōnia*, and there from the

the Sect of the *Jenxuani*) is so prodigiously absurd, that it either makes *no difference* 'twixt *Right* and *Wrong*, and infers *True* and *False* to be a couple of empty words, (which signifie nothing, or the same thing, *the Will and Pleasure of the Prince*;) or else infers this Contradiction, that *the same* Things and Persons are in severall Times and Places both *True* and *False*. So that according to This Position, the Christian Religion was a *false* one under *all the Heathen* Emperours, who did publickly *prohibit the Teaching* of it; yet a *most true* one under *Constantine* surnam'd *the Great*, and under all the following Emperours, who strictly *commanded* it to be *Taught*. *Jesus Christ* (with Mr. *Hobbs*) must have been a *false Prophet*, as not approved of by *Herod* and the *Then-Emperour* of *Rome*; whilst *Mahomed* must be a *true* one, because allow'd by *the great Sultan*, supreme Governour of the *Turks*. The *Will and Pleasure of the Prince* being set up by *That Monster*, as the sole *Touchstone*, or *Criterion*, whereby a *Prophet*, or a *Doctrin*, or a *Religion* is to be try'd. *None* (says He) *but a Sovereign in a Christian Commonwealth, can take notice what is, or what is not the Word of God.* A greater

Leviath.  
p. 250.

power than is ascribed by the *Jesuites* themselves, either to the *Bishop* or *Church of Rome*: a power to abrogate the *old*, and (as often as he will) to make a *new* Canon of Scripture, or *none at all*.

Deut. 13. 1, 2.

§ 5. Had such Seducers of the people appear'd in publick among the *Jews*, a present *Death without Mercy* had been inflicted as the wages of *Their Iniquity*. (*Deut.* 13. 5. and *ch.* 18. v. 20.) The Setters forth of new Doctrins in that *Mosaical* Dispensation could not escape their *publick Trials* in the Great *Parliament* of *Israel* they call'd *The Sanedrim*; and were condemn'd as false Teachers, either to be *strangl'd*, or *ston'd* to death. Yea, though they had shewn *Signs and Wonders*, and though *their Signs came to pass* too, yet could it not exempt them from suffering Death, in case they tended to *seduce* the silly Admirers of their Wonders to *worship Idols*, or any other way to *enervate the Law of Moses*: which none could be allow'd to doe, and yet be thought a *True Prophet*, unless he could doe *as real Miracles* as *Moses*, and give as *cogent Demonstrations* as *Moses* had given, of his having been *inspired and sent by God*. Therefore *None* but the *Messias*, who *out-did Moses*,



*Moses*, and that as well in point of *Miracle*, as in *Holiness of Life*, and in *illustrating* or *compleating the whole Moral Law*, could lawfully *abolish the Ceremonial*. Yea even Those *Divine Prophets* or *Men of God* ( as they were call'd ) who still *asserted the Law of Moses*, and dissuaded men with vehemence from *Idolatry* and *Schism*, were fain to *prove* they were of *God* by unfeigned *Miracles*. By such a Real *Miracle* of the anonymous *Prophet* at *Bethel*, *Jeroboam's Hand* was *dry'd up*, and *restored* to him. By such a *Miracle* of *Elijah*, the *Fire of the Lord* fell down from *Heaven*, and consum'd the *Burnt-sacrifice*, together with the *Altar* on which it lay. Whereby the *People* were *incens'd* against the false *Prophets* of *Baal*, and presently *slew* them all as *Cheats* by the *River Kishon*. By such a *Miracle* of *Elisba*, even *Naaman an Idolater* was suddenly *cleansed* from his *Leprosie*, and convinced of *Jehovah's* being the onely *true God*. By the like unfeigned *Miracles*, *Moses* baffled all the *lying ones* of the *Sorcerers* in *Ægypt*. And if the *Prophets* *Then* had need of shewing many and great *Miracles*, to prove the *Truth* of *That* Religion which the *Israelites* were then in Possession of ; How much a *greater* need

1 King. 13.  
46.

1 King. 18.  
38, 40.

2 King. 5. 15.



need of Miracles should our *Seducers* stand in, whereby to make us leave our *Old*, and wherewith to draw us on to their *New* Beliefs? That Doctrin (for example) of *Jesus Christ* and his *Apostles*, [that we must *obey them who have the Rule over us*, and that we must *submit ourselves to every Ordinance of man for the Lord's sake*,] was confirmed by greater Miracles (if any greater can be) then *Moses* and the *Prophets* confirm'd theirs by. And by Consequence, if our Pretenders to supernatural Illumination will have us adhere to their *New Doctrin*, [that we must *not submit to every Ordinance of man, but rebell against them; nor obey, but resist such as have the Rule over us; nor do any thing in Religion with any Decency or Order, but all as rudely and as confusedly as we can*,] they must perswade us by greater Miracles than those of *Christ* and his *Apostles*, whom we believe. At least they must be able to convince us of Errour in Life and Doctrin, (as *Moses* did *Corah* and all his Separatist-Relations,) by commanding the Earth to open, and to swallow us up quick: or strike us dead without a blow, (just as *Peter* did *Ananias*,) for our usurping That Authority to preach God's Word, which our *Schismatics*

*maticks* and *Enthusiasts* of each Extreme are wont to arrogate as a *Right* belonging onely to themselves. But (God knows) we have too many, who need *no working of Signs and Wonders* to deceive them: so very fond they are of *Novelties* in Religion it self, that they are often drawn from it *without a Miracle*. Yea, if the *True Prophet* from *Judah* could suffer himself to be deceiv'd by the cunning *False Prophet* who dwelt in *Bethel*, (*1 King. 13. 18.*) for which (not the *False*, but) the *True Prophet* was *slain*; (*v. 24.*) how apt are *others* to be deceiv'd who are *no Prophets at all*? Very great need therefore we have, to *Try Pretenders* to the Spirit, before we *Trust* them, whether or no they have indeed a *Prophetick Spirit*; and whether they speak the mind of God by any *Immediate Revelation*.

§ 6. A *general Rule* whereby to try them (though 'tis particularly apply'd) *S. John* sets down in the next verse after my Text; *Hereby know ye the Spirit of God. Every Spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh, is of God.* A Text whose pithy Brevity makes it difficult and obscure, and so it stands in some need of an Explication. I take its meaning to be This. Every Spirit which *confesseth*, or every Pretender who *owns* our Saviour, not onely by

word of Mouth, but in *Life and Practice*, and from the Heart, both as *Jesus a Saviour*, and as *Christ a King* too; Every one who does own him as well by his *Faith*, as his *Confession*, and as well by his *Obedience*, as by his *Faith*, to be the onely true *Shiloh* that was to come; Every one who does own him to be come in the *Flesh* too, not onely in his *Divine*, but in his *Humane Nature* also, which *Cerintus* and *Ebion* and *Simon Magus* did deny; (unto whom in particular *S. John* alludes in this place;) lastly, Every one who owns him in his *Exinanition*, in his most *despicable Condition*, which made his *Friends* to fly from him, and *Peter* himself to disavow him; Every one who does own him in his tremendous *Crucifixion*, his *Death*, and *Burial*, and confesseth him even so to be \* the Son of the living God, or God manifest in the *Flesh*, 'Tis plain that every such Spirit must be concluded to be of God.

\*Mar. 16. 16.

So that if any shall here object against *S. John's* Rule of Triall, that many *Hereticks and Schismatics* do confess *Jesus Christ* to be come in the *Flesh*, who notwithstanding are of the Devil, and not of God; Two Answers are to be given for the Objector's behoof and satisfaction; one from *Esius*, and another from *Tirinus*. (Though the Substance of them Both I have anticipated already.)

*Esius*

*Eftius* answers, that *S. John* did direct This Rule against the Hereticks of his own Times, who denied *Jesus Christ to have come in the Flesh*: and such were those Three whom I nam'd a little before. Which Answer is indeed *good*, but not *sufficient*. *Tirinus* therefore adds fitly, that by our *Confessing Jesus Christ to have come in the Flesh*, is meant our *Confessing and Believing* (to wit, our *practical Believing*) that *Jesus Christ is the Messiah*; both a *Saviour and a Prince*, (as *S. Peter* calls him,) who gives *Repentance unto Israel, and Forgiveness of sins*. Not *Forgiveness without Repentance*, nor *Forgiveness before Repentance*; but *Repentance in the first place*, and *Forgiveness in the second*. In which very order, both of *Dignity and Nature*, *S. Peter* had exhorted to Both before, (*ch. 3. v. 19.*) *Repent, and be converted, that your Sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord*. And all *sincere Repentance* implies *Obedience*, as the same *S. Peter* argues, *Act. 5. 32*. This Answer is very *good* and *sufficient* too, unless, by being *too short*, it may be also *too obscure*, or not sufficiently *perspicuous* to some of the slowest apprehensions; for which defect in the next place I shall endeavour to make amends.

§ 7. And because where the Touchstone it

Act. 5. 31.

Ibid.

self is False, all sorts of Trial must needs be foolish; Therefore Pretenders to the Spirit are to be try'd by such a *Touchstone*, as needeth not it self *Another Touchstone* for its *Trial*. And such a *Touchstone* is to be taken out of those plainest Places of Scripture, whose sense and meaning is agreed on even by men of *All Judgements*; Texts deliver'd in such clear and univocal Terms, that *opposite* Parties do apprehend them in *the very same way*; And as they never *have* been yet, so they never *can* be matter of any *Cavil*, or *Dispute*. And because I pretend not to *teach* my *Fellow-Teachers*, or such as need not to be thus taught, (though the *most knowing* may not disdain to be put in *remembrance* of what they *know*,) but onely the *Ignorant* and the *Unstable*, who (for want of due *knowledge*, or of sufficient *Consideration*,) are like *Clouds without water*, *carried about of Winds*, (as *S. Jude* describes them;) I shall be carefull that every Part of the *Test* or *Criterion* I am to give, may be *short*, and yet *easie*, and (I hope) *without all Question*. The several *Parts* of the *Touchstone* will be no fewer than 6 or 7. Nor are the *Spirits to be try'd* by any *one* or *two* of them, but by *All put together*, *whether or no they are of God*.

Joh. 14. 17.

First, The Spirit that is of God is *the Spirit of*

of Truth. And therefore if any man, who is outwardly of a *seeming good Life*, is yet of very ill Judgement in *Fundamentals*, in Points *essential to Christianity*, as in the Doctrin of *Obedience to every Ordinance of Man*, to the *Higher Powers*, to *Them that have the Rule over us*, and do watch for our Souls; (a Doctrin running in a Vein throughout the Body of the Gospel, and essentially belonging to All Religion;) especially if he ascribes to a *sinfull man* (not to say, *The Man of Sin*,) That Incommunicable Attribute of God himself, [*Infalibility*,] and gives to every Priest the Privilege to doe a much greater Miracle than ere was done by *Christ* Himself, so far forth to transubstantiate a piece of Bread, as fir<sup>t</sup> to *make* his own Saviour, and then to *eat* him; He must needs be misinstructed by the *Spirit of Errour* and *Fascination*, the Spirit with which he is bewitch'd, (as *S. Paul* speaks to the *Galatians*,) let his outward Conversation be what it will, let his visible Course of life be never so plausible, or severe.

Next, The Spirit that is of God is *the Spirit of Holiness and Purity*, as well as *Truth*. And therefore if any man, who is *Orthodox*, is at the same time *Disbonest*, of some *good Opinions*, but *evil Practice*, does *hold the Truth*, but in *unrighteousness*; especially if he takes upon him (by That Vi-

1 Pet. 2. 13.

Rom. 13. 1.

Heb. 13. 17.

1 Joh. 4. 6.

Act. 8. 9, 11.

Gal. 3. 1.

Rom. 1.  
4. 18.

\* *Vid. Les Provinciales*  
 5. 6. & Ca-  
*ramuel de*  
*Theologia*  
*Fundamenta*  
*li p. 71, 72.*  
*de Escobar*  
*Theol. Moral.*  
*Tom. 1. l. 2.*  
*c. 2. p. 34.*  
*39. 43. 160.*  
*c. c.*  
*a Mar. 5. 8.*  
*b Eph. 4. 3, 4.*

Mar. 5. 9.

Rev. 12. 9.

1 Cor. 4. 12.

1 Cor. 14. 23.

per of Morality and all Religion, the *Jesuites Doctrine* of \**Probability*) not onely to *allow*, but to *incourage* and *abett* the grossest Villanies in the World, (without exception;) He is not season'd by the Holy, but the <sup>a</sup> *Unclean Spirit*, let his *Orthodoxie* of judgement, as to some Fundamentals, be what it can. An *honest Heathen* is not so bad as a *Christian Knave*.

Thirdly, The Spirit that is of God is <sup>b</sup> *the Spirit of Unity and Love*. And therefore if any sort of men shall take upon them to be *Reformers* by making *Schism*, by dissolving the *Bond of Peace*, wherein the *Unity of the Spirit is to be kept*, and shall *crumble* Religion into as many small Parcells, as the Caprices of Idle men shall have the liberty to suggest; especially if they shall labour to separate Subjects from their Sovereign, by absolving them from their Oaths of Christian Obedience and Fidelity, or by instructing them to *swear*, with a Design to be *forsworn*; They are mis-led by That Spirit whose Name is *Legion*, even the Spirit of *Division*, That *old and cunning Serpent which deceiveth the whole World*.

Fourthly, The Spirit that is of God is *the Spirit of Meekness and of Order*. And therefore if any *despise Dominion*, and *speak evil of Dignities*, and in pretence of being the *Meek ones* who are by

right



right of Promise to inherit the Earth, demurely tread upon Crowns and Crofiers, and love to be levelling with their Feet, whatsoever (according to God's special Providence) does overtop them by Head and Shoulders; especially if they presume to place the single *Bishop of Rome* above *General Councils*, invest him with a Power to *excommunicate Kings*, and *subvert whole Kingdoms*, and make the People hope to *Merit* by the most prodigious *Murthers*; They must be led by *That Spirit*, which is called *The Angel of the Bottomless Pit*, *Abaddon*, and Ἀπολλύων, that is, *Destroyer*; even *the Spirit which is still working in the Children of Disobedience*.

Rev. 9. 11.

Eph. 2. 2.

Fifthly, The Spirit that is of God is *the Spirit of Sincerity*, induing All whom He inhabits with an absolute *Simplicity* and *Singleness of Heart*. And therefore They who do hold up their *Left hand to God*, but their *Right* against their *Governours*; having *Godliness* in their *Profession*, but practical *Atheism* in their *Lives*; hating *Idols* from the Teeth outwards, but loving *Sacrilege* from the Heart; crying down *Superstition*, but preaching up the Creature-comforts flowing from *Plunder*, which they call *Providence*; declaring with zeal against the *Prelates*, but ever voting up the *Papacy* of their *Superintendents*; declaiming much against the

the *Señtaries* who are not of their *Denomination*, but breaking down the *Hedge of Discipline* whereby the *Herd*s are to be kept from *God's Incl sure*; especially They who have invented the Art of *Æquivocating* and *Cheating*, the Art of *Swearing* any thing *safely*, by mental *Exceptions* and *Reservations*, the Art of *Couzenage* by the *Contract* they call *Mohatra*, and the like; must needs be acted by *that Spirit* whom the *Scripture* has expressed by *the Father of Lies*, even *the Spirit of Hypocrisie*, That black Prince of *Darkness*, which *transforms himself* with ease into an *Angel of light*.

Joh. 8. 44.  
2 Cor. 11. 14.

Sixtly, The Spirit that is of God is *the Spirit of Knowledge, and Wisdom, and Understanding*. And therefore if any man cites *Scripture* against the whole *Tenor* and *Stream* of *Scripture*, and *wanders* into the *wrong* way, even by That very *Word* which does direct him into the *Right* one; especially if he levells the *Canon of Scripture* with the *Apocrypha*, and makes the *Pure Word of God* to truckle humbly under *Tradition*, whereby it becomes \* of none effect; if men so learned, and so acute, and so sagacious as the *Jesuites*, after all the heinous things they have *done* and *taught*, are so far from discerning *what Spirit they are of*, that they utterly mistake an *Evil Spirit* for a *Good* one; a Spirit from *Hell*, for one from *Heaven*; the Spirit which

1sa. 11. 2.

\* Matth. 15.  
6.  
Mar. 7. 13.

which reigns in *the Court of Rome*, for the Spirit which guides in *the Church of England*; if they can think it the Top of Piety, to advance the Lord *Jesus* quite against the Lord *Christ*, and make the *Christian Religion* the greatest *Transgression* of *Itself* ( which moves the *Jansenists* to call them *The Antichristian Society* ; ) if they can take it for the Comble of *Christian Merit* and *Perfection*, to espouse and put in practice this *Turkish* Maxime, that Religion is to be propagated (where'tis possible) by the *Sword* ; They must needs be possess'd by the *Spirit of Slumber*, the *Spirit of dead Sleep*, the *God of this World which blindeth the mind* : for so the Devil is once call'd, *2 Cor. 4. 4.*

Rom. 11. 8.

1st. 29. 10.

What I have thus drawn out at length, our Blessed Lord does wind up into This *short Bottom*, (*Matth. 7. 20.*) *Ye shall know them by their Fruits.* But the Fruits of *That Spirit that is of God* are reckon'd up by *S. Paul* to be such as These; *Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Meekness, Goodness*, and the like. And therefore They who, in stead of *loving Enemies*, do persecute and oppress the *mystical Members* of the same *Body* whereof *Christ* is the *Head* ; who lay the *Cross of Christ Jesus* on *Christian Shoulders*, robbing one of a *Living*, another of a *Liberty*, a third of a *Life* ; and this for no other Crime than being *constantly Conscientious*,

Gal. 5. 22, 23.

Gal. 5. 19,  
20, 21.

( and very real *Friends* to *All*, because the *Flatterers* of *None*, though able to *injure*, or to *oblige* them ; ) must needs be managed by That *carnal* and *unclean Spirit*, which makes them so *fruitfull* and so abounding in the *works of the Flesh* : such as *Hatred, Variance, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Heresies*, and the like.

§ 8. Now if All these Particulars be laid together in our minds, I suppose we have a *Touchstone* to *Try the Spirits* of *Pretenders*, whether or no they are *of God* ; and such a Touchstone, as needs not it self another Touchstone to be Try'd by. But because the *best* Touchstone is *nothing worth* to such as know not how to *use* it, we shall doe well to take notice of one Rule more in the using of it. For, considering how many *\*Vices* do too much *border* and *confine* upon several *Vertues*, and how many *Lies* are more *plausible* to flesh and blood than many *Truths* ; and hardly any thing can be so *false*, but may have *Colours* and *Probabilities* to *set it off* ; ( being neatly laid on by men ingeniously wicked ; ) and that a multitude of *Ignaro's* do often *swallow* the grossest *Errours*, ( presented to them in the *Disguise* of the greatest *Truths*, ) by not distinguishing *Words* ( as they ought ) from *Things*, and blending one thing with another, and taking them down all at once, without any *masticating*

\* Troppo com-  
fina la Virtù  
col Vizio.

cating or chewing ; I say, for This reason, we must not pass our *last Judgement* upon Pretenders to the Spirit, untill we have made our selves acquainted as well with their *Habits*, as with their *Acts* ; as well with the *main* or *general* current of their *Lives*, as with the meer *conduct* and *carrying-on* of their *Designs* ; with the *Means* they make use of, as well as with the *End* they pretend to *aim* at ; with the *Building* which is *erected*, as well as with the *Scaffold* by which 'tis *rais'd* ; with *All* their *Actions* in a lump, as well as with the *most specious* and *fairest* of them. And when This is done thoroughly, Then let the Hypocrites and Impostors be what they will, let the *Forms* of Godliness and the *Features* of Religion be never so artificially and neatly drawn, let the *Colours* be laid on with never so delicate a *Pencill*, and let that *Pencill* also be managed with never so exquisite *Address* ; 'twill be most *easie* to find the *difference* between the *Picture* and the *Life*. Let *Zeuxis* his lively *Grapes* be never so apt to *deceive* the *Birds*, yet the *Deadness* of his *Boy* will unfold the *Cheat*.

§ 9. The very Truth of it is, *We* should be utterly *unexcusable*, if *we* should fall into the *Snare* of *The certain men among us crept in unawares*, of either sort, because their *Arts* of deceiving are *gross* and *obvious* ; fit to infatuate Understandings of the

2 Theff. 2. 9.  
2 Cor. 11. 14.

Matth. 24.  
24.

Exod. 7. & 8.

lowest size onely, and such as are willing to be deluded. There were *Counterfeits* in the most primitive and purest Times of the Church, who were *brave Cheats* indeed; who, besides their *Form of Godliness*, besides their *Praying* and their *Preaching*, could also set forth themselves by *Signs and Wonders*. The Devil had taught them That subtil Trick of *transforming themselves into Angels of light*; and so of *deceiving* (if it were possible) the very *Elect*. Such were *Barrabochebas*, *Apollonius*, and *Simon Magus*. Whereof the First had got a faculty even of *vomiting flames of Fire*; the Second could tell the men of *Ephesus*, what in That very Hour was done at *Rome*; the Third (like a *Cherub*) could *fly abroad into the Air*. So that *They* had some kind of *Colour* for their giving out themselves to be the *Messengers of Heaven*, some *Pretences* for their Broaching a *New Theology* to the People; because their Counterfeited Miracles, however derived from *below*, might seem at least to *short Reasons* to have been given them from *Above*. And to be couzen'd by such as *These*, were a more tolerable Infirmary; a Credulity more to be pitied, and very much more (rather than less) to be pardon'd also. The *Magicians* also in *Ægypt* were such admirable Deceivers, that They were able (as well as *Aaron*) to turn their *Rods* into *Serpents*, and their *Slime* into *Frogs*, and their



their *Waters* into *Bloud*. So as if *Moses* and *Aaron* (through God's Assistance) had not publickly convicted them of downright *Sorcery and Incantment*, (wherein the Magicians grew eminent through the Assistance of the Devil;) If *Aaron's Rod* at last had not swallow'd up *Their Rods*, and turn'd the *Dust* into *Lice* through all the Land, <sup>wh</sup> the Magicians could not doe, but confessed (to their own shame) that *The finger of God was in it*; Lastly, if *Moses* had not smitten the very *Sorcerers themselves* (as well as the rest of the *Ægyptians*) with *Boyls and Blains*, insomuch that the Magicians could not stand before *Moses*; They had had a shrewd Advantage in the deceiving of the People, and the People so deceiv'd had been excusable à Tanto. Whereas our modern *Enthusiasts*, or *Pretenders to Revelation*, and to a *Testimony within them from God the Holy Ghost*, are not so much as good *Jugglers*; They are wofull Impostors, and silly Cheats; such as *Saran* indeed has furnish'd with very much *Industry*, but with very small *Wit*; whereby He does not more strongly Tempt them, than he discovers them to be *His*. They being so far from being indow'd with extraordinary Gifts, whereby to prove to us an extraordinary Commission; so far from setting out themselves by Signs and Wonders, (like those Primitive Deceivers of

whom our Saviour gave all his Disciples *Warning*, (in the 24<sup>th</sup>. of *S. Matthew*,) or like Those of whom *Moses* forewarn'd His People, (in the 13<sup>th</sup>. of *Deuteronomy*;) that they *come short* of most men of the *Church of England*, even in *Those very things* wherein they would be thought *eminent*. The onely *Gifts of the Spirit* which they pretend to, are but *Praying* and *Preaching*; in their Performances of which they *signalize* themselves by *Nothing*; or at least by *nothing more*, than *Noise*, and *Nonsense*. The *Gift of Tongues*, or the *Gift of Healing*, or the *Gift of being subject to Higher Powers*, for *Conscience sake*, or for the *Lord's*, or any other such remarkable *Apollonical Gift of the Holy Ghost*, I never heard that our Adversaries on either side did ever yet so much as *pretend* unto. They seem to be as unapt to *obey their Governors for Conscience sake*, (which is one special Gift of the Holy Ghost,) as to *speak with new Tongues*, or to *raise the Dead*.

§ 12. Now if those *Exquisite Pretenders*, in the Infancy of the Gospel, *Barchochebas a Jew*, and *Apollonius Tyanæus* an arrant *Heathen*, *Simon Magus*, *Menander*, *Basilides*, and the like, who by *Profession* at least were *Christians*, were not *Then* to be believ'd, notwithstanding their *Inchantment* and *Magick-miracles*; If a *false Prophet* under the Law, who led the People into *New Errors*, (as *Vincen-*



*tius Lirinenſis* expounds that Paſſage *Deut. 13. 1, 2, 3.* and applies it to a *false Teacher* in the Times of Chriſtiani-ty, in particular and by name, to *Valentinus, Donatus, Photinus, Apollinaris,* ) was not onely not to be *beeded* or *bearkened* to, but alſo was by That Law to be *put to Death*; yea (one ſtep farther,) *If an Angel from Heaven, who ſhall preach another Doctrin than what hath hitherto been deliver'd,* (whereby to lead us into *Rebellion*, or *Schiſm*, or *Sacrilege*, or any Conſpiracy whatſoever againſt the Government we are under,) muſt be no otherwiſe entertain'd, than with an *Anathema Maranatha*; How much leſs may our *Shallower* and *Unſkilfuller* Impoſtors be believed to be of God upon their own *ſingle Word*, and *without a Witneſſ*, whiſt they cannot confirm or commend their *Novelties*, no not ſo much as by *ſeeming Miracles*? no not ſo much as *That Man of Sin, That Son of Perdition*, of whoſe *Coming* *S. Paul* ſaith to his *Thelſalonians*, that 'tis *after the working of Satan, with all Power, and Signs, and* (with itupendous, though) *lying Wonders*?

But grant they had (what they have *not*) an Ability to ſhew us ſome *Signs and Wonders*; yet *Apollonius Tyanæus* would put them down.

Suppoſe they *preached* extremely *well*, as 'tis plain they do *not*,) yet *Photinus* and *Neflorius* would go beyond them.

Do

Vin. Lin. c. 15.

2 Theſſ. 2.  
3. 9.

Math. 24.  
24.

Math. 7. 22.

Matth. 23.  
14.

Do they make very *long Prayers*? So did the *Pharisees* for a *Pretence*, that they might the more *filily devour Orphans and Widows houses*.

Matth. 4. 4, 6.

Have they a readines and facility in citing Scripture? So had *Julian the Apostate* when he disputed against the Gospel. So had *Satan* in his *tempting* our Blessed *Saviour*; when he wrested God's Oracles with as much subtilty and address, as the *keenest* of our *Recusants* (of what strain soever) are wont to do.

Do they pretend their being warranted by an immediate *Revelation*? So did *Numa* the *Roman*; and so did *Eumenes* the *Greek*: so did *Mahomed* the *Saracen*; and *Alarichus* the *Goth*: lastly, so did the *Pretenders* in the *Primitive Church*; which made *S. John* exhort Christians to *Try the Spirits*; alledging This for his reason, that *many false Prophets are gone out into the World*.

Quomodo ob  
Religionem  
Magni, qui-  
bus Magnitu-  
do de irreligi-  
ositate pro-  
venit? Ter-  
tull. Apolog.  
cap. 25. p. 56.

Is God's *permitting* them to be *prosperous*, or to *sin on* with great *Impunity*, any Argument that he *approves* them? No, 'tis the weakest way of reasoning which our *Adversaries of Rome* have delighted in. For, (besides that we find them confuted often by their *Afflictions*,) God *permits*, what he *abominates*, his own *Disshonour*. How patiently did he permit the *Disobedience* of the *First Adam*, and *Crucifixion* of the *Second*? All the Villanies in the world

world do come to pass by God's *Permission*, however *contrary* they are to his *Rules* and *Precepts*. And if *prosperous Inpiety* does therefore *cease* to be *Inpiety*, because 'tis *prosperous* and *permitted*, (that is) *not hinder'd by force and violence*, (inconsistent with a *free* and a *moral Agent*;) Then the great *Sultan*, and the great *Cham*, and the great *Mogul*, as well as the great *Bishop of Rome*, are by an equally-sound Consequence the greatest *Favourites of Heaven*. And then the Argument of \**Symmachus* had been unanswerably conclusive against the *Primitive Christians*, who for 300 years and upwards lay groaning under the *Yoke* of the *Heathens Tyranny*. Lastly, if *Permission* were still a Mark of *Approbation*; Then *Dionysius* (or *Diagoras*) had argued logically well, when, having robb'd the *Delpbick Temple*, & immediately after *escap'd a Shipwreck*, he gave it out, that *the Gods had approv'd his Sacrilege*. Not at all that he *believ'd*, but *laught* at *Providence*.

§ II. What now can be said farther, in the behalf of our *Pretenders* to the *same Spirit's Illumination*, which clear'd the Heads of the *Apostles*, and warm'd their *Hearts*? Can it be said they live *strict* and *religious lives*, though lives of *Schism* and *Disobedience* to humane *Laws* and *Lawgivers*, expressly said in Holy Scripture to be the *Ordinances of God*? But admit it were *True*, (which yet is *so false*, that it implies a *Contradiction*,) 'twere not

\* apud Prudentium ad Valentin.  
Si Romanae Religiones regna praestant, nunquam retro Judaea regnasset, Despectrix communium istarum Divinitatum. Ter-tull. Apol. c. 26. p. 57.

Hieron. ad  
Marcellam.

Philostrot.  
l. 3.

\* Mazzini  
Hist. Ind.  
l. 12. p. 319.  
& l. 14.  
p. 378.  
1 Cor. 7. 31.

Ideo me exal-  
tare non veri-  
tu, quia ad  
huc Sanctus  
per totum  
Seculum ad-  
oratur.

prevailing. For the Heretick *Montanus* grew so proud of his *Strictness*, of his *Demure* Course of life in point of *Abstinence and Sobriety*, and suffering *Hardships*, as to believe himself in Time to be *The Paraclete* downright; not a *Godly man* onely, but even *The Holy Spirit of God*. In which case 'tis very evident, that even his *strictness* was his *Disease*: and that *the Spirit* which *overrul'd* him was from his *Spleen*. The Heathen *Brachmans* also of *India* were so *temperate*, and *chast*, and so addicted to *Self-denials*, (in \*order to their gaining upon the opinions of the People with whom they liv'd,) that they seem'd (in all appearance) to use *This World* as not abusing it: (exactly so as *S. Paul* exhorts the followers of *Christ*.) Such an *externally-strict* Person was the Papalins *S. Francis*; who yet discover'd his *Humility* and *passive Meekness* (as I have read many years since, *apud Authorem nescio Quem*, as *Cicero* speaks in the like case,) to have partly been a *Cloak*, and partly an *Instrument* of his *Pride*. For, being ask'd why he *rejoyced* amidst the *hardships* of his *Imprisonment*, *Because* (said he) *the whole world will even adore and canonize me among their Saints*. Hereby we see the strict Necessity of the last Rule I mention'd for the right using of the Great Rule by w<sup>ch</sup> the Spirits are to be Tried. For, Lastly, by neglecting to Try *the Spirits* of Pretenders, whether or no they be of God, (and to try them

them impartially by every part of That Touchstone I lately gave,) How very many have we known of our poor Separatists in England, (acted as they have been by the late Emissaries of Rome,) so strangely shallow, and over-credulous, as readily to imagin that every Schismatick is a Saint, who is not a Sabbath-breaker, or Swearer, not a Drunkard, or an Adulterer, and is so or so qualified in point of Judgement; or (to speak more exactly) in point of Party, and of Opinion? It must therefore be well consider'd, and carried constantly in mind by such as These, that of the two 'tis less intolerable to be a Swearer, than a Rebel; a Drunkard, than a Thief; a common Thief, than a Sacrilegious one; and a less horrid thing, to be corporally vile, than to be spiritually proud of one's own Perfections. We must beware of all the former, as we ever hope to fly from the wrath to come; but more especially of the latter, as being much the more Luciferian Sins. Sins which can never attend men to Heaven, having brought down the Angels of Heaven to Hell. Drunkenness and Whoredom (however damning) are Sins the Devil cannot commit: but Envy, and Malice, and Schism, and Sacrilege, Hypocrisie, and Rebellion, and intoxicating Pride, are peculiar to him; they are the Devil's Sins so properly, that they are properly call'd Devilish in Men, or Christians, wherever found. And as These of all Sins are much the most Diabolical, so they are the most damning of any other, for ought I can collect from

the words of *Christ*, (*Matth. 23. 14.*) and by the words of *S. Peter*, (*2 Pet. 2. 9, 10.*) If they who *bate* our Congregations and way of Worship, because they judge *the Holy Ghost* to have *forsaken our Meetings*, and to *dwell onely in theirs*, or because we do not easily *shut the Door* against Sinners, (till by Authority authoriz'd,) though they are under the Reputation either of *Drunkenness*, or *Whoredom*, or any other the like *Scandalous* and *Deadly Sin*, but not under the Sentence of *legal Excommunication*, (till when we cannot *lawfully* shut them out from our Communion,) I say, if the Censurers of our Patience and Longanimity towards such would but turn their Eyes *inwards*, or duely reflect *upon themselves*, and compare those Sins which *the Devil never commits*, with those several *other* Sins which are *proper* to him; If they would not onely *observe*, but also *remember*, and *consider*, and religiously *lay to heart*, the terrible Emphasis and force *S. Peter* puts on the word *μαλιστα*, saying of Them who *despise Government*, that they are *chiefly*, or *most especially*, *reserved by the Lord unto the day of Judgement to be punished*; and the most formidable Importance of That *Greater Damnation*, which our Saviour has denounced against those *Hypocrites*, who *for a Pretence do make long Prayers*; I say again, if our dissenting & separating Brethren (in love and pity to whose Souls we pray & preach for their Conformity)

2 Pet. 2. 9,  
10.

Matth. 23.  
14.



ty) would have the Patience and the Humility to chew enough on these things, They would think with more Charity of our Communion, and with less Arrogance of their own. They would not separate from us *Then*, unless for contrary Inducements than *now* do move them. They would separate from us *Then*, in an humble opinion of their own *Vileness*; saying from the heart with the meek Centurion, *Lord, we are not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under our Roof*, and are by consequence *unworthy* to have admittance under *Thine*. They would not separate from us *Then*, unless in the Spirit of *S. Peter*, afraid to approach unto *Christ* himself, with a *Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a Sinfull man*. They would not separate from us *Then*, like those Idolaters in *Isaiab*, with a *Stand farther off, come not near to us, for we are holier than you*; But rather, like the Lepers under the Law of *Leprosie*, would cover their faces with Confusion, and stand aloof from God's House, accusing themselves of their *Uncleanness*: or, like the *Προκαταίτιες & Ὑποκρίτες* in the Primitive Times of Discipline, falling down flat upon their faces, (not in the Church, but the Churchyard, at an humble Distance,) would beg the Charity of *Their* Prayers whom they saw entering into God's House at the Times of Prayer. Were they such Separatists as *These*, and from such a Principle as *This*, from the excesses onely of *Meekness*, and not of *Pride*, we should receive them with the Embraces of Arms and Hearts; we should

Luk. 7. 6.

Isa. 65. 2, 5.

Lev. 13. 45, 46.

AR. 2. 41.

readily afford them even the *Right hand of Fellowship*; we should conclude *the Holy Ghost* had so descended upon their *Souls*, as once he did upon the *Heads* of the 12 *Apostles*, or rather upon the *Hearts* of *th*se 3000 who at *S. Peter's* one Sermon were added to them: Though not in the *Edifying Gifts* which were bestowed upon the *former*, yet in the *Sanctifying Graces* which were infused into the *latter*.

§ 12. But having spoken enough already of *Trying the Spirits* in *other men*, I think it fit to say something of *Trying* them also in *our selves*. For considering the words of the Prophet *Jeremy*, *The Heart of man is deceitfull above all things*; and that 'tis given to very few, (few, I mean, in comparison,) to *know what Spirits they are of*; I guess it concerns us all in general, and every one of us in particular, to resume the whole Text, and bring it home unto our selves; to *search and try* our own *Hearts*, and to *examin* our own *Spirits*, *whether or no they are of God*. 'Twas the Precept of *Pythagoras* to every man of his Sect, that he should bring himself to the Test, or call himself to an Accompt, every Evening of his whole Life, with a Πῃ παρέβην; τί δὲ ἐπέξα; τί μοι δέον ἐκ ἐτελεύτη; what he had *done* in That Day which he ought to have *omitted*, and what good thing he had *omitted* which 'twas his Duty to have *done*: Nor was he to suffer himself to *sleep*, till he had made up this *Reckoning* *three several Times*. So 'twas the Precept of *S. Paul*, in his 2<sup>d</sup> *Epistle* to the *Corinthians*, *Examin*

Μὴ ὕπνου-  
μεν σιχαδι,  
Πεὶν ἢ ἡ-  
μεραν ἔρ-  
γων τοῖς ἑ-  
κατον ἐπι-  
θεῖν.

2 Cor. 13. 5.

your



your selves whether ye be in the Faith : (meaning That Faith which does work by Love all manner of Obedience to the Law of Christ's Gospel : ) ἐκ τούτων δοκιμαζέσθε, prove or try your own selves, whether ye have not yet received the True Faith of Christ ; or whether, having once received, ye still retain it. Know ye not your own selves how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be Reprobates ? So S. Paul reason'd with his Corinthians ; and so must we with or within our selves. Know we not that Christ is in us, by the Presence of his Spirit ? and by the Power of his Word ? and by the evident effects of His Operation ? Such as our Sorrow for our sins past, our hatred of our selves in Remembrance of them, and our stedfast Resolutions of better life ? Know we not that Christ is in us by such Evidences as These ? If we do, Then let us treat him in such a manner, as may become so Divine a Guest. But if we do not, we have some reason to fear, lest we have sinn'd-away our Saviour, as arrant Reprobates and Castaways ; as men unworthy to be call'd Christians ; as men who either are not at all Regenerate, or else are fallen from That State of Regeneration which we were in ; or (to express it with S. Paul) as men who have received the Grace of God in vain. And as it concerns us on all occasions to try the Spirit which is in us, whether 'tis a good, or an evil Spirit ; so most especially does it concern us at such a Time as This is, when we Tread in God's Courts, to offer up the Gospel-sacrifice of Supplication and Thanksgiving ; to hear

hear His Word, & to partake of his Sacraments. (Duties equally belonging to the first Sunday of the month.) For the *Bread* of God's *Children* must not be cast unto the *Dogs*; and the Food which is *Spiritual* belongs to *Them onely* who can *spiritually discern* it, and who *live not after the Flesh*, but *after the Spirit*. I do not mean after *every Spirit*, (for there are *many more than good*, as I shew'd before,) but after *The Spirit that is of God*; The Spirit of *Holineß*, and *Truth*; The Spirit of *Unity*, and *Love*; The Spirit of *Meekneß*, and of *Order*; The Spirit of *Singleneß*, and *Sincerity*; The Spirit of *Wisdom*, and *Understanding*; The Spirit of *Counsel*, and *Ghostly Strength*; The Spirit of *Knowledge*, and *true Godlineß*; and lastly, The Spirit of God's *Holy Fear*; (as the divine Prophet *Isaiah* expresseth him *resting upon Christ*, of whom the good King *Hezekiah* was but a *Type* in That place.) Unto all which if I should add, *The Spirit of Promise*, (with *S. Paul*), and *The Spirit of Prophecy* (with *S. John*), *The Spirit of Grace*, (with holy *Zachary*), and *The Spirit of Glory*, (with *S. Peter*), I should but say, *The same Spirit*, in the vindicating of whom from the many *False Spirits*, which (in this last Age especially) have been *debauching* the Christian World, I have imploy'd the little Time which is *allow'd* for this Part of our *Morning Service*.

To Him therefore with The Father in their Unity with The Son, Sing we *Hosannas*, and *Hallelujahs*, *Blessing*, *Glory*, *Honour*, and *Power*, To Him that liveth for evermore.

Iſa. 11. 2.

Eph. 1. 13.  
Rev. 19. 10.  
Zech. 12. 10.  
1 Pet. 4. 14.

(39)

O F

The exceeding Sinfulness

O F

SCHISM;

In how many

GREAT REGARDS

It is worse than

HÆRESIE;

A N D

Why more damning than other Crimes.

2 THESS. 3. 6.

*Now we command you, Brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw your selves from every Brother that walketh disorderly.*

§ 1. **A** TEXT exciting us to a Duty which does equally *invite* and *command* Attention. For the Duty is introduced with as *important* an *Obtestation*, as is any-where us'd in

F

S. Paul's

S. Paul's Epistles : and it must certainly be a matter of exceeding great moment, which could extort from our Apostle so *great* and *signal* an *Obtestation*. He calls us *Brethren*, (for we are now in the place of the *Thessalonians*,) to win our Love, and to shew his *own*. But withall he *commands* us, as God's *Embassador*, that he may make as good impression upon our *Fear* too. We may take his whole Meaning in This plain Paraphrase.

Παγγελλομεν, *We charge you*, and that by virtue of our Commission, or in the power of our Apostleship, *in the name* and the behalf, by the Bowells and the Authority of our *Lord Jesus Christ*, as ye will answer it at the great and terrible Day of Discrimination, *the Day wherein the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels in flaming Fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting Destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power; by every thing that is dreadfull, or dear unto you, παγγελλομεν υμιν, we declare, we denounce, we command you, Brethren, that if ye observe any Professor of the Christian Religion (who for that reason onely is call'd a Brother)*

2 Thess. 1.  
7, 8, 9.

to forsake his proper *Calling*, his *Place* and *Station*, and to meddle as a *Buifbody* in other mens Matters, ( *v. 11.* ) and so to cast off all Obedience to the Rules of Direction which we have given ; ( especially if ye observe him to leap from the *Shop* into the *Pulpit*, or out of the *Church* into a *Synagogue* consisting of the most *factious* and disorderly *Opiniators* , who, under colour of *serving God* , *despise* the Ordinances of *Men* ; ) ye presently *Note* him, and *mark* him out, as a *Disorderly Walker* , as a *Disturber* of *Society*, as a *Disseminator* of *Discords*, the very *Bane* of all *Religion*, and the *Discredit* of *Christianity* ; most *unworthy* to be *admitted* to any *Commerce* or *Conversation* with *regular* *Christians* ; but to be *shunn'd* like any *Leper*, and to be *cast out* of your *Company*, as if he had a *Plague-sore*. ( *v. 14.* )

Thus I *paraphrase* the Text, as I find it relating to the Context ; and by comparing our *Apostle's* with our *Saviour's* own Rule. For ἀτάκτως περιπατῶν, *A Brother walking disorderly*, in this present verse, does seem to be the same *unruly* and *irregular* Person, who is expressed by the word ἀτάκτος. *1 Thess. 5. 14.* Which being a *Military* expression, and of peculiar use in *Tacticks*, does properly signify a *Souldier*

who runs away from his Colours; quits the Service he undertook and engaged in; denies obedience to his Commander; not onely to his Lieutenant, but Captain-General; (that is to say, without a Metaphor,) depraves the Doctrine, disturbs the Discipline, disowns the Government of the Church: By any one of which Three he is disorderly in his Walking, however they are commonly all Three in one.

§ 2. Now when a Brother, (that is) a Christian, (at least in Profession and Pretense,) is so disorderly in his Walking, as that he will not bear the Church, but is a Contemner of Authority, and Publick Order; He is, by the Rule of our Blessed Saviour, to be look'd upon and dealt with, just as \*Heathen-men and Publicans were look'd upon and dealt with amongst the Jews: We must avoid him, as a prophane and an impious person; as one who is void of all Religion, and as it were without God in the World. Thus we must brand and stigmatize him for two good Reasons, and pious Ends: first, that himself may be ashamed, and being ashamed may be converted; (2 Thess. 3. 14.) next, that others also may \*fear to doe, and suffer, by his Example.

§ 3. That *This* was the meaning of our Lord, (Matth. 18. 17.) seems to me very evident from

Two

\* Matth. 18.  
17.

\* 1 Tim 5.  
20.

Two especially of his *Aposiles*; I mean, the *most learned*, and *most beloved*. They tell us *Both*, that when a *Brother* is become *contumacious*, and not reclaimable either by *private*, or by *publick* Admonitions, we must not onely not *religiously*, but not so much as *civilly* entertain commerce with him. We must *not* \*eat with such a Brother, or *keep him company*; must not \*receive him into our Houses, or bid him God speed. And there is *reason* for this *Severity*, which S. Paul and S. John have thus *injoyn'd* us. For can there be any thing more *apposite*, more *pertinent*, or *proper*, than to deny *them* our Company in *private* Houses, who disdain to afford us their own in *God's*? Why should we *eat and drink* with *Them*, either at *Their*, or *Our Tables*, who are therefore *too unworthy*, because they *think* they are too *Good*, to *eat and drink* in our company at the *Table of the Lord*? Why should we any-where go with *Them*, who will not go with *Us* to *Heaven*; and *bate* the means of *Salvation*, so far forth as we *injoy* them? Is it any way consistent either with *Charity*, or *Reason*, that we should *bid a man* God speed in the ways of *Corrah*; or *assist* his *Society*, who *bates* our *Religion*, and our *God*? No, he is rather (says our Apostle) *to be put away from us, and from among*

\* 1 Cor. 5. 11.

\* 2 Joh. 10.

1 Cor. 5.  
2. & 13.



1 Tim. 1. 20.

1 Cor. 5. 5.

us, (as a foul, pestilential, accursed thing,) and even *deliver'd up to Satan* by the Censures of the Church; although it be to this charitable and wholsome end, *that he may learn not to blaspheme*; that he may learn to be *conformable to Rules and Rulers*; and so *that his Spirit may be saved in the Day of the Lord Jesus*.

§ 4. 'Tis true that *All vicious persons are disorderly Walkers*, who walk as far as they are able from the strait *Path of God's Commandments*: and from *All* that are *Scandalous* we are commanded to *withdraw*. For so saith *S. Paul*, (1 Cor. 5. 11.) *I have written unto you, not to keep company, if any man that is call'd a Brother be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with such a one no not to eat*. No not in one of your private Houses, much less in the Sacrament, and House of God. But I do not here speak (nor does *S. Paul*) touching absolute *Apostates*, who do renounce and fall away from the *whole Faith of Christ*, and the very *Profession of Christianity*; because *They* are not so much as *call'd*, or *accounted Brethren*. Nor do I speak of *Jews, or Heathens*, who, because they are *avow'd and open Enemies of Christ*, may with much the *more safety*, or rather with much

much the *leſſ danger*, be traffick'd with. ( And accordingly S. *Paul* has excepted *Them*, in the very next verſe before my Text, and the next verſe after.) But I ſpeak of groſs Sinners, on whom *the name of Chriſt is call'd*. And amongſt *Them*, in ſpecial manner, I aim at two ſorts of men who are called *Brethren* ; and ſo (like *Judas* downright) do betray the whole *Cauſe of Chriſtianity* with a *Kiſs*. I mean the *Hæretick* for one, who breaks the Unity of the Church in point of *Doctrin*, by *denying* one or more of her *Fundamentals* : I mean the *Schiſmatick* for another, who breaks the Unity of the Church in point of *Disciplin*, by doing as much as in him lies to overthrow her very *Government, Laws, and Order*. The *Fiſt* of Theſe we muſt *rejeſt*, and *withdraw our ſelves from*, in caſe he ſhall not *reform* himſelf, after a couple of *Admonitions* : Tit. 3. 10. Much *\*more* the *Second*, as the more *Scandalous*, and the more *miſchievous*, and the more *impious* of the two. And being by much the *moſt irregular* of all *diſorderly Walkers* my Text intends, he is the fitter to be the Subject of my Diſcourſe at this Time. For an *Hæretick*, as he is *ſuch*, does onely offend againſt *Faith and Truth* ; and keeping his Error to himſelf, (as very eaſily he may, and very

many

\* Nulla ab  
ita tanta po-  
teſt fieri cor-  
ruptio, quan-  
ta eſt ſchiſ-  
matis perni-  
cies, Iren. l. 4.  
c. 62.

many there are that do,) so as it never shall run out, either at his *Tongue's* or his *Finger's* end, is nobody's Enemy but his own; is a regular Citizen, and a good Subject, living friendly with his Neighbours, and in an uniform Obedience to his Superiors. Whereas a *Schismatick*, as he is *such*, does *also* offend against *Peace* and *Charity*; and cannot possibly keep his Schism unto himself, but needs must hurt others with it, because 'tis publick in its own Nature, and cannot be *Schism*, unless it be so. For he separates himself from the publick Worship; affronts the *Governors*, and scorns the *Government* of the Church; cuts himself off from the *Communion* of the *Body of Christ*; sets up Altar against Altar, *Dan* and *Bethel* against *Jerusalem* and *Sion*; sets up a *Ministry* of his own making, against a *Priesthood* ordain'd by God; abetts a *Conventicle* prohibited by God and Man, against a Church set apart by the Laws of Both; like *Jeroboam* downright, whose Sin consisted in *This* especially, that he made *Israel* to Sin. Now an *active Divider* in and of the Church of God, must needs be worse than any other, who is but passively divided and cut off from her. And to destroy a whole Society by subverting the whole *Legislative power*, must needs be worse than to violate

violate a particular Law. And That which makes way for *all the Hæresies in the world*, as well as for *all the Immoralities of life*, (which *Schism* does evidently do,) must needs be worse than any *Hæresie*, which does onely make way for itself. And so a *Schismatick* is the more *impious*, and the more *mischievous* of the two. Again, a *Schismatick* is worse than a simple *Heretick* as such, not for *this* reason onely, because a *vitious Practice* is naturally worse than a *wrong Opinion*; (though that is reason great enough;) but for this *other* reason also, (not so commonly observ'd as I wish it were,) because a *Schismatick ipso facto* is mostly *an\*Hæretick* into the Bargain. For besides his renouncing the *Ninth Article of the Creed*, (that *Form of sound words* deliver'd to us by *Christ's Apostles*,) *The holy Catholick Church*, and *The Communion of Saints*; (duly expounded and understood;) I say, besides That, He flatly *despises*, and *detests* (for 'tis a little thing to say, he *disowns*, and *disbelieves*,) That principal *Doctrin of the Gospel*, That *Fundamental of Christianity*, That great *Essential* to All Religion, that we must *heartily submit to every Ordinance of Man*; and that as well for *the Lord's sake*, as for our *own*; nor one-

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\* Hieron. ad  
Tit. c. 3 See  
Dr. Ham. of  
Schism, c. 1.  
p. 7.

1 Pet. 2.  
13, 14, 15.

\* Rom. 13. 5.

ly for fear of Wrath, but for \*Conscience sake.

Eph. 4. 3.

§ 5. Why I chuse to call This, *a principal Doctrin of the Gospel, a Fundamental of Christianity*, and the great *Essential* to All Religion, I seem to my self to have so many and great *Reasons*, that if they were every-where *urged*, and *laid to heart*, (especially by the Parties who are the *least aware* of them, but *most concern'd* to take them in,) they might *suffice* to put an end to those numerous *Schisms*, which now do *threaten* to put an end to our *whole Religion*. The Doctrin of *Obedience* to humane *Governours* and *Laws*, is certainly the *ap- test* of any other, (next to that of our *Obedience to God himself*, whereof this Doctrin is a most *necessary part* too,) to *keep the unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace*; and to *congregate* into one Body the most *disjoynted* and *scatter'd* Members in Church and State. A Doctrin laid for this purpose by God the Father, from the *Foundations of the World*; and that in the *Law of the first Creation*. A Doctrin propagated by *Moses*, as *Taught of God* to teach others. A Doctrin *perfected* by *Christ*, as by the *Wisdom* of the *Father*, who *pray'd* his Followers might be *one*, even as his *Father* and *He* were *one*: (*Joh. 17. 11.*) which yet without *Obedience* to this very Doctrin can never be. A Doctrin inculcated and inforced by God *the Holy Ghost*,

*Ghoſt*, as by *the Spirit of Love*, and *Meekneſs*, of *Peace*, and *Union*. A Doctrin extended to *All Authority* upon Earth; not onely *Regal* in the firſt place, (*1 Pet. 2. 13.*) but *Eccleſiaſtical* in the ſecond, (*Heb. 13. 17.*) To ſumme up all in a word, There is not a Doctrin in all the Goſpel, either more *earnestly*, or more *aſſiduouſly*, either more *plainly*, or more *expreſſy* preſcribed to us, (and that under pain of *Damnation* too,) than that of our *uniform Obedience* to *All* that are *over us in Authority*. I ſay, to *All*; not onely to the *Beſt*, (the *Good and Gentle*;) but as well to the *worſt*, and *moſt \*froward* Governours.

\* 1 Pet. 2. 18.

§ 6. It is not onely moſt *fooliſhly*, but moſt *nefariously* pretended, that the *Piety*, or *Impiety*, the *Religion*, or *Irreligion*, of them that are over us in the Lord, can either *widen*, or *contract* our divine *Obligation* to ſtrict Obedience. For never was any *incarnate Devil* more incomparably impious than thoſe Emperours of *Rome*, *Tiberius* and *Nero*; whom yet our *Saviour* and *S. Paul* commanded their *Followers* to *obey*, and *obey'd Themſelves*. For *Obedience* to *Magiſtrates* being of *Divine right*, ſtrongly founded upon the *Will* and the *Word* of *God*, and even a *part* of our *Obedience* to *God Himſelf*, (whiſt it is paid to that Authority which God has commanded us to



Rom. 13. 1, 2.

pay an Obedience to,) cannot possibly be due to *the men, as men*, or to the *Good, as they are Good*; but to the *Magistrates or Masters reduplicative*, as they are *such*: 'Tis due to the Governours *as they are Governours*, and as *the Ordinance of God*; let their Practices and Opinions be what they will.

§ 7. 'Tis true, when our Governours are *Usurpers*, or (being *None*) do command us what God *forbids*; *There* there lies an *Exception* to our Obedience, due to God, rather than Man. But This *Exception* makes strongly for *all* I have hitherto said; and that by virtue of the old Axiom, *Exceptio firmat Regulam in non exceptis*. So that by this Rule and Reason, that when God and His *Deputies* do stand in *competition* for our Obedience, God must have our *whole Active*, and His *Deputies* our *Passive* Obedience onely; It cannot but follow, that when our Governours are *rightfull*, and do *onely* command what God does *no-where* forbid, or do *onely* forbid what God does *no-where* command us, *There* we must obey God, by obeying Man: there being *no other way* of paying God our Obedience, in such a case. For *There* our Governours Command is the Command of God too. *There* the very same Law which is *immediately Humane*, is also *mediately Divine*:



*Divine*; Because we *There* are commanded by *That* Authority upon Earth, which in the Old and New Testament *God* has *commanded* us to *obey*. Nor is there *any one Duty*, belonging to us as *Men* or *Christians*, which *God* is pleas'd to make a stricter Provision for. We are no more commanded to *fear God*, than to *honour the King*: nor are we more forbidden to *worship Idols*, than to *resist* or *disobey* such as are *over us in Authority*.

§ 8. This I do the rather insist upon, in my Design upon the *Welfare* and the *Conversion* of our *Schismatics*, ( the most *Disorderly Walkers* of all my Text alludes to, or comprehends in its Importance, ) because I can *no more* separate ( no not so much as in my *Conception* ) the Sin of *Schism* from *Disobedience to just Authority*, than *Disobedience* from *Rebellion against the Gospel*, or a *State of Damnation* from either of them. They are *all three united* in the *Schismatics* of old, as *S. Jude* describes them. For, speaking in his Epistle of *Certain men crept in unawares*, *despising Dominion*, and *speaking evil of Dignities*, *Clouds without Water* carried about of *Winds*, *raging Waves of the Sea*, *foaming out their own shame*, *wandering Stars*, to whom is reserved the *blackness of darkness* for ever; He

Jude 4.

8.

12.

13.

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proceeds in his Description to call them *Mur-murers, Complainers, Walking after their own Lusts, Separating themselves* [from the Church Establish'd,] and pretending to have, but indeed *having not the Spirit*. This is S. Jude's Hypotyposis or Description of the *Gnosticks*, who were the *first and worst Schismaticks*, the *first and worst Hereticks*, the *first and worst Rebels* in the Primitive Church; the *first* who *separated themselves* upon this account, that they *thought themselves perfecter and purer Christians* than others were; the *first* who preached up *Christian Liberty* to consist in an *Exemption* from all Authority upon Earth, from all Superiours whatsoever, whether *Masters, or Kings, or Apostles and Governours of the Church*; The *first* we meet with in all the Gospel match'd and parallel'd (for *wickedness*) with *Cain and Core*, yea with *Sodom and Gomorrah*, yea with Those *Schismaticks in Heaven, the Angels that kept not their first Estate, but left their own Habitation*, (v. 6.) and were *thrown* headlong by their *Schism* from Heaven to Hell; Briefly, the *first* in the *New Testament*, who are *set forth for an Example*, (as *Sodom and Gomorrah* were in the *Old*,) of *suffering the Vengeance of eternal Fire*, (therein *tormented day and night for ever and ever*,

ever, Rev. 20. 10.) And so they are parallel'd (for their *Misery*, as well as *Sin*,) with them that separated themselves from the *Church Triumphant*; reserved therefore by the Judge in everlasting Chains under Darknes, unto the Judgment of the Great Day. In all this S. Jude agrees exactly with S. Paul, (1 Tim. 6. 3, 4, 5.) and as exactly with S. Peter, (in his whole 2<sup>d</sup> Chapter of his 2<sup>d</sup> Epistle,) as if the one had taken Notes out of the other. No less terrible are the Expressions of the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, concerning such as persevere in the Sin of Schism, Heb. 10. 23, 25. to v. 30. where They that do not hold fast the Profession of the Faith without wavering, (v. 23.) but forsake the Assembling of themselves together, (at the Stated Times and Places by just Authority appointed,) as the manner of some is, (v. 25.) are inferr'd to sin wilfully, after they have received the knowledge of the Truth, (v. 26.) and there remains nothing for such, but a certain fearfull looking for of Judgment and fiery Indignation, (v. 27.)

Jude 6.

§ 9. Nor indeed is it a wonder that the Holy Ghost's Penmen and Amanuenses should set themselves, as 'twere on purpose, to terrifie Schismatics from their Schisms, and to persuade them into Conformity, by shewing the Terroures of the Lord;

2 Cor. 5. 11.

*Lord; by thundering out Damnation, more to That tingle Sin, than to all the rest: For a wilfull and a Groundles Separation from the Catholick and Apostolick Church, or from a National Church onely, which is a true Part of the Universal, (such as is the Church of England, where nothing sinfull is required as the Condition of our Communion,) whether by Breach of that Communion in which a man ought to have continu'd, or by a Refusal of that Communion which 'tis his Duty to be of, (and that as well by Divine as by humane Laws,) is so infinitely far from walking orderly, or according to the Tradition we have received of S. Paul, (that is, according to the Rule of a Christian Life, deliver'd to us in the Scriptures,) that 'tis to give the greatest Scandal which can be given to Christ's Enemies, and tends to make the whole Gospel of none effect. It helps to justifie the Turks, the Jews, and Gentiles, in the Præjudices they have to the Christian Name. It helps to harden them in their hatreds, and even tacitly forbids them to be Believers.' Tis true that Hæresie and Schism do so agree in one generical Signification, that Hæresie is Schism in point of Doctrin, and Schism is Hæresie in point of Use. But they are so very different in their specifical acceptions, that Schism*

is many ways the *worse*, as I said before. And if S. Paul by the word *Hæresies* does \*not signify them *Both*, it follows that *Hæresie* of itself is rank'd with *Hatred, Idolatry, Witchcraft, Murders*, Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21. And then how damning a Sin is *Schism*, whereof *Hæresie* is but a *Part*, as I shew'd before? *This* is also there reckon'd among the *Works of the Flesh*. For *Hatred, Variance, Emulations, Wrath, Strife, Seditions*, what are they all, but several *Members* or *Concomitants* of *Schism*? implying *Schism* to be a *System* or *Body* of Sin epitomiz'd. S. Paul accordingly speaks of *Schism*, as of a complicated *Carnality*, which (like the proverbial *Trojan Horse*) carries an *Army* of Impieties within its Bowels. 'Twas *That* (by way of eminence) S. Paul accused, of having made his *Corinthians carnal*. And the Character which is given to the *Double-minded man* (Jam. 1. 8.) belongs as well to the *Schismatical* or *Carnal-minded* man, that he is *unstable in all his ways*. For such exactly is the *Schismatick* by way of *peculiarity*; who having faln from his *Center*, [The Church of God,] knows not after *where* to *fix*; but wanders about from *Sect* to *Sect*, from *Party* to *Party*, from *Hæresie* to *Hæresie*, from *Schism* to *Schism*, and so indeed does *try*

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\* Note that *Synagoga* placed after *apostles* may well signify *Schisms*, because the word is so taken Rom. 16. 17. and because *Schisms* are a kind of Ecclesiastical *Seditions*.

1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 3. 3, 4.

*all things*, (in a most *perverse* and *peevish* sense,) as never to *hold fast what is good*. *Experience* is the *Mistris* by which we have been *taught This*. (I mean the *wofull Experience* of Six and Thirty years old.) And we are most prodigious *Dunces*, if after so many years *Instruction* in the *School of Affliction* and *Experience*, we are no whit the wiser for such a *Lesson*. For *what things* are there in Holy Writ, (how essential soever to Christianity,) which have not been *question'd*, and *disputed*, if not *deny'd*, and *rejeſted*, since *Schiſm* took place in the *Chair of Scorn*? To *this alone* we owe the *raging* of the *Sea*, and the *roaring* of the *Waves*, whereby the *Madneſſ* of the *People* is oft expreſs'd. To *this alone* we owe the *Legion*, I do not ſay onely of *Creeds*, of *Religioſities*, of *Dogmatizings* here in *England*, (ſince the year 41. in eſpecial manner,) but even of *Skepticism*, *Apoſtaſy*, and of *Attheiſm* it ſelf.

§ 10. Now if any are deſirous to know the *Reaſons*, why our *Schiſmaticks*, rather than *others*, (however *Scandalous* in their lives,) are *ſingl'd out* from the whole *Herd* of *Notorious Sinners*, to be *paradigmatiz'd* as *diſorderly Walkers*, from whom we are *\*moſt* to *withdraw ourſelves*; I ſhall endeavour their Satisfaction by theſe

\* Pejor hoc  
crimen eſt,  
quàm quod  
admiſſiſſe  
Laſci viden-  
tur. Cyprian.  
de Unitate  
Eccleſiæ.

— xxi. que  
ſe præſentat  
Euseb. l. 6.  
c. 36.



these 4 Reasons. First, because of all Sinners, *They* seem to be the most *desitute* of Christian *Meekness* and *Humility*. Next, because of all Sinners, *they* are the most *void* of Christian *Charity*, as That is Superiour to *Faith* and *Hope*. Thirdly, because of all Sinners, *they* are the greatest *Underminers* of *Society* and *Government*; the greatest *Adversaries* to *God*, as *the God of Order*; the greatest *Disturbers* (and the most *dangerous*) of private *Propriety*, and publick *Peace*. Lastly, because of all Sinners, our Schismatics here in *England* are the most barbarously *ingratefull*, and most deplorably *unexcusable* of any other. I am very much mistaken, if I have not great reason for these 4 Reasons. But whether so, or not so, I leave to the *Judgment* of my *Superiours*; and content myself with This, that (without any passion) I speak mine own.

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§ 11. To the first of my 4 Reasons I premise S. Paul's Character touching Schismatics in general; to wit, that *they consent not to wholesome words, and the Doctrine which is according to Godliness; but are proud, knowing nothing, doat about Questions, and Strifes of words, whereof cometh Envy, Strife, Railings, evil Surmises, perverse Disputings of men of corrupt Minds, and*

1 Tim. 6. 3,

4.

5.



2 Pet. 2. 10,  
15.

*destitute of the Truth. From such (says he to Timothy) withdraw thy self. S. Peter adds, They are presumptuous, selfwill'd, despise Government, have forsaken the right Path, and are gone astray. Now from Scripture thus speaking, let us reason the case a little, and then apply it. Can any be farther from Humility, than They who know nothing, and yet are proud of their Knowledge? Can any Pride be more prodigious, than that by which the very basest and the most despicable of Subjects do not onely abhor, but despise their Governours? nor onely the Persons, who are but Men, but even Government it self, which is avowedly Divine in its Institution? The Apostle's Expression is rich and elegant, as well as true. For to despise, or contemn, to depreciate and scorn, and as it were to look down upon Those above us, does not favour of a vulgar, or of a middle-siz'd Pride, but of Pride in its Exaltation. Can any Pride be more monstrous, than for vile Dust and Ashes even to Deifie Itself? yet the Schismatick seems to doe it in Three respects. For first, he arrogates to himself God's Incommunicable Attribute, whilst he founds his grossest Errours upon an Infallibility: which he does not onely ascribe (as others do with more modesty, and shew of Reason,)*

Reason, although 'tis no more than a *shew* of Reason,) to the *whole*, either *diffusive*, or *representative Church*; but to his *own individual Person*, *acted* (forsooth) and *over-acted* by That which he calls (speaking out of his own Heart) the *infallible Spirit of God*. In any Controversie arising touching the sense of any Scripture, He does not appeal to the *Original*, or *Context*, to *Fathers*, or *Councils*, or *Commentators*, (all riss-rass in his Esteem,) but to *Illumination*, and *Revelation*, and The *Testimony within him*. Nor can I imagin what should keep him from *returning* into the Church he has turned from, unless it be the *worst Effect* of the *greatest Pride*, a *shamefulness* to *confess* he has *ever err'd*. Next he *Deifies himself* by not enduring *God's Toke*, or indeed that *God* should *reign* over him. For if *the Powers that are on Earth are ordain'd by God*, (as *S. Paul* affirms,) it is evident that we live under a *Οικουμένη*; that *God*, by *Then*, does *reign over us*: and *they that resist shall receive Damnation*, because they *will not be under God*. This is certainly at the *Bottom* both of *S. Jude's*, and *S. Paul's*, and *S. Peter's* reasonings, when they infer *eternal Torments* (as they every-where do) from *Disobedience* to the *Authorities*, and the *lawfull Commands of Men*. Besides, the *Schismatick*

*matick* seems to *Deifie himself*, by seating himself on the *Throne of God*, and undertaking to be the *Judge of Quick and Dead*; by opening the *Seals of the Book of life*; and expounding God's *Decrees of Particular mens States from all Eternity*. He takes upon him before the Harvest, to sever the *Wheat from the Tares*, and the *Sheep from the Goats*. He forsooth, and his *Party*, and none besides, are the *Elect*; whilst *all* from whom they *All separate*, are *Vessels of Wrath and Reprobation*. Again, how far is That *Professor from Christian Meekness*, who says as the *Schismatics* did of old, in the Prophet *Esa. Stand farther off, come not near me, for I am holier than Thou? thanking God that he is not as other men are*, neither a *Sabbath-breaker*, nor *Swearer*, nor even as this or that *Publican*; no *Conformist*, no *Royalist*, nor even as this or that *Excize-man*, gathering *Tribute-money for Cæsar*: and proudly taking to his *Party* the name of *Saints* at every turn, which he *denies* to the *Apostles* in all *Discourse* he makes of them on all occasions. Briefly, for a *Person of very low Parts*, and little *Learning*, of contemptible *Education*, and small *Improvements*, to separate from a *Great and Admired Church*, *The Church of England*, and from the

Iſa. 65. 5.

Devo

*Devotions* of the same in her Publick *Liturgy*, All contrived by the *Wisdom*, directed by the *Learning*, embraced by the *Piety*, established by the *Authority* of such a Nation, confirmed by at least 33 Acts of Parliament, and by as many Convocations, or Representatives of the Clergy, sign'd and seal'd by the *Sufferings* of many *Confessors* and *Martyrs*, lastly, asserted and defended against the Wit and the Malice of all Opponents ; I say, for a person grossly ignorant, and *knowing nothing* in comparison, to scorn or pity all his *Teachers*, as *Fools and Blind* ; for him to *think* he *sees* more or better, than the *two Universities* put together, commonly call'd the *two Eyes* of this National *Body*, ( which is as if the *silliest Sheep* that ever leap'd out of a *Fold*, should take upon them both to *guide* and to *feed* their *Shepherd* ; ) This does argue such an *Arrogance*, *Self-conceitedness*, and *Pride*, as no Rhetorick can express, no *Charity* excuse, no *Humility* not censure. Although *Novatus* was made a *Schismatick* by a *proud opinion* of his own *Purity*, and by his carnal *Ambition* to head a *Party*, as *Simon Magus* did the *Gnosticks* in the Apostles own Times, on the same account ; yet now the *Copy* and *Translation* has so outdone its *Original*, that our *Schismaticks*

maticks have accus'd the *Laws and Canons* (for *Uniformity*) of being *Such*. They could approve of most things, in case they were not impos'd by *Law*. The very Reason why they ought, is the Reason they will not serve God in order. They dare not doe what they know they may lawfully, for fear they should seem to think an human *Law* binding. The onely fault of our *Liturgy*, is its having been compos'd, Authoriz'd, and made use of, by the wisest and the Best of our English World, especially by the *Governours* in Church and State. They will have *Parliaments* and *Synods* strike fail to Them. Whatsoever is *Great* or *Sacred* is marked out for the object of their *Contempt*. Unless *Antiquity* and *Authority* will condescend and stoop to them, yea unless they may tread upon *Crowns* and *Scepters*, there is not any thing will please them, or give them rest. Forsooth They want a main part of their *Christian Liberty*, unless they may not onely be suffer'd to cast away their *Cords* from them, but also to bind their *Kings* in *Chains*, and their *Nobles* with links of *Iron*.

Psal. 149. 8.

§ 12. Nor are our *Schismaticks* onely arriv'd at the *Top* of *Pride*, (which is my first reason,) but they are also sunk down even below the  
very

1 Cor. 13. 5.

very Bottom of *Christian Charity*, (which is my second.) For *Charity thinketh no evil*, but our *Schismaticks nothing else*. They cannot see their own Eyes, much less the Beams that are in them; but in the Eye of a *Conformist* they can see every Mote, and easily look it into a Mountain. They perfectly hate, whomsoever they have injur'd for being blameless; that is, for refusing to walk with *Them* in the ways of *Corah*: And if we strive to *doe all things* (in the publick worship of God) with any *Decency or Order*, as *S. Paul* and our Governours do strictly bind us; they pretend to see nothing, (such is the yellow, or black Jaundise of Malignity and Prejudice,) but either *Popery* or *Paganism* in all our Service. Hence they separate from us, (though not *Christians* onely, but *Protestants*;) with no less aversion (in all appearance,) than from *Papists*, and *Pagans*, and *Limbs of Satan*. Nor can they rationally deny, that they esteem us as bad as either: for if they judge not our Communion to be as absolutely Unlawfull, as they do their own Communion to be of absolute Necessity to their Salvation, they cannot separate from us, and excuse themselves at the same time. They will not pretend they are unwilling to go to Heaven in our Company; but that they leave us as



going on in the way to Hell. This must needs be their meaning, or else they cannot excuse *themselves unto themselves*. So as they must be void of Charity by either side of the Dilemma. For either they really *do* believe us to be as well their fellow-Saints as their fellow-Subjects, or they *do not*: truly if they *do not*, they then are void of all Charity to *Us*, in *thinking* nothing but *evil* of us; not the *best* our Case will bear, but the *worst* to be imagin'd. And (on the other side) if they *do*, they are at the least as void of Charity to *Themselves*, and do *despise* their *own Souls*, by *excommunicating themselves* from their fellow-Saints. For what Pretense can they have for their separating from *us*, if they think us *Christ's Members*, as well as *They*? The terrible Saying of S. Cyprian, [that *Martyrdom is not sufficient to make amends for a man's Schism*,] is as true, as 'tis notorious, and as rational, as 'tis true. And yet it can be neither, unless it be on this Ground, that *Schism is exclusive of Christian Charity*: on which supposal S. Cyprian did strongly argue out of S. Paul. *Though I speak with the Tongues of Men and Angels, though I have the Gift of Prophecy, Faith, and Knowledge, though I bestow all my Goods to feed the Poor, lastly, though (by Martyrdom)*

*I give*

*Et si tales occisi in Confessione nominati fuerint, Macula ista nec sanguine abluitur; Inexpiabilis culpa Dissordis, nec passionis purgatur.* Cyprian. de unit. Eccl. 1 Cor. 13. 1, 2. 3.



*I give my Body to be burnt, and have not Charity, it profiteth me nothing.* But if I live in *Schism*, I have *no Charity*; because I separate my self (as from the Children of the Devil) from many Thousands of thousands better *Men*, better *Christians*, better *Protestants* than my self. And so my *Alms* in that case are but *Ostentation*: my yielding up my self to be *burnt alive*, is a *mad kind of Martyrdom* in such a Case; 'tis but a *Sacrifice* to my *Humour*, to my *Obstinacy*, and *Stomack*, like that of *Clement* and *Ravilliac*, who died Martyrs to the *Popedom*, and not to *Christ*; or like the Martyrdom of *Hierocles*, who writ a Book against *Christ*, and after That at *Byzantium* died a Martyr to his *Stoicism*, as our *English Regicides* to their *Fanaticism*, and *Vanninus* to his *Atheism*. Those alone were the *Deities* which they *ador'd*, and *died for*. 'Tis not the *Bravery* of the *Sufferer*, but the *Divinity* of the *Cause*, which makes a Martyrdom *meritorious* (if any properly can be such) in any measure: and so *S. Cyprian* said rightly, (being but rightly understood,) that even *Martyrdom cannot expiate the Sin of Schism*.

§ 13. Thirdly, *Schism* is *destructive*, (in its *Tendency* at least,) not onely of *Government*, wheresoever there *is any*; but of *Society itself*,

upon a supposal that there is *none*. Every body knows, (as well as *Machiavel*,) that to *divide*, is to *infeble*, and so the very shortest way to *destroy* a Nation. The *Church of England* is but *one*, and in its *Unity* lies its *Safety*, because its *Strength*. But *many* and *many* are the *Seëts*, which *Schism* has made by *dividing* from her; and so it is a *Devil* whose name is *Legion*. For the *effects* of which *Legion*, we shall not need consult more, than our own *Memories* and *Experience*. For from the year 41 till 60, all our National Calamities *began* in *Schism*; in *Schism* they *continued*; and if ever they are *completed*, 'twill be in *Schism* too. *Schism* was *ours*, as it was *Corah's* first Crime. For though *Mutiny* and *Rebellion* were the natural *Issue* of it, (as *Schism* in the *Church* does ever carry *Faction* in the *State* along with it;) yet 'twas chiefly as a *\*Schismatick*, that *Corah* was swallow'd up alive, and his *separate Congregation* together with him. 'Twas *Schism* which did set up The *Assembly of Divines*, against our regular *Convocations* and *National Synods* of the Clergy. 'Twas That that set up the *Directory*, against the *Liturgy* of the *Church*. 'Twas *Schism* made *Sacrilege*, and a *Sale of the Crown-Lands*, and kill'd *God's Anointed* in order to it. But for

\* *Opratus*  
l. 1. p. 25.

for *Schism*, we had not heard either of *Plunder*, or *Sequestration*; the sound of those Names had never reach'd our English Ears. 'Twas *Schism* call'd *Strength the Law of Justice*. 'Twas *Schism* which founded all *Right* in *Dominion*, and *Right of Dominion* onely in *Grace*; and so (by their Doctrine of irrelative and necessitating Decrees,) infer'd the Great *Turk* to have much more *Grace* than our *Christian Princes*, because more *Right*, by more *Dominion*. Finally, *Schism* was the *Dam* of all the *Blasphemies*, both of *those* and the *present* Times. The *Leviathan* itself was but the *Spawn* of That *Parent*. Behind the *Veil of Toleration*, which *Schism* begot too, and under the Protection of *Christian Liberty*, which *Schism* expounded into what we now see it, Horrid *Ochlocracy*, and *Chirocracy*, and ugly *Anarchy* itself, has been hatching, or ingendring, ever since *Monarchy* was restor'd. For some are longing after the *Onions* and the *Flesh-pots* of *Egypt*, as much as ever. And as we have liv'd to see a *Triumph* without a *War*, or a *Skirmish*, (in the most happy Resuscitation of God's *Spouse*, and his *Vicegerent*;) so do we live to see a *War* too, within the Bowells of Church and State, without other *Weapons* than those of *Schism*. For our *Schismatics* are an *Army*,

however yet *without Arms*. Happy we, that they are so; and most unhappy, if they are otherwise. For hardly ever were there *Schismatics* (in any Part or Age of the Christian World) without this *Turkish* and *Popish* Principle, that *Religion* is to be *propagated* (where 'tis possible) by the *Sword*.

§ 14. Lastly, our *Schismatics* here in *England* are of all others the most *ingrateful*, and *unexcusable* in their *Schism*. The most *ingrateful*; because by Those very *Laws*, and under the Protection of those *Legislators*, which they *hate*, and *despise*, and *conspire against*, they hold the greatest Injoyments that men are capable of on Earth; to wit, their *Liberties*, and their *Safeties*, their *Livelihoods*, and their *Lives*. Again, the most *unexcusable*; because they cannot but *know*, yea they cannot but *acknowledge*, (and their *Chieftains* do it in *Print*,) that we are *Christians*, and *Protestants*, which they also pretend to *be*: that we have *all* the *Fundamentals* (which they pretend also to have) of the *true Religion*; whether as it consisteth of *Faith*, or *Practice*: we own the *Creed*, and the *Commandments*, and the *whole Word of God*, as *all* (or *most* of) our *Schismatics* pretend to *doe*. We agree in *all Essentials* with *All the Protestant Churches*

Churches of *Christendom*, as The *Harmony of Confessions* will convince every Creature who will but *read* them. Whence then the *Murmurings* and *Disputings* (against Authoritative Commands) so strictly *forbidden* by *S. Paul*, *Philip. 2. 14*? or what *excuse* can be found for a *Separation*? Let us examin the whole Affair from Top to Bottom; and let us consider what they would have to make us worthy of their Society; and why they separate from *Us* of the *Church of England*, as from *Papists*, if not *Pagans*, and *Brands of Hell*, as I said before. 'Tis plain, we do not worship *Idols*; and 'tis plain, we have *none* to worship. We *add no Articles* of our making to the Apostles own *Creed*, (as we know who do.) Nor do we *pare away* one of the Ten Commandments, and *slit* another in the *midst*, to complete the number. Nor do we equal the *Apocrypha* with the *Canonical Books of Scripture*. We have but *two Sacraments*; and *pray in English*. *Wives* are permitted to our *Clergy*; and by Them to the *Laity* the *Cup of Blessing*. We do not *buy* and *sell Pardons*; nor do we trust in any *Merits* save those of *Christ*. We pray for none at all who are departed this *Life*; and much less to them. We *renounce* the strange Doctrin of

Tran-

*Transubstantiation*, as we do all Pretensions to *Infallibility upon Earth*. If we yield the Bishop of Rome a naked *Primacy of Order*, we do refuse him at the same Instant all *Supremacy of Power*; and do *limit* his Jurisdiction within his own own *Diocese*, or *Province*. Then what *Pretense* can any have, (who are *not Papalins Themselves*,) to *dread*, or *bate* a *Communion* with us? If some things *indifferent*, and *uncommanded* in Holy Writ, do make them *separate* from *us* of the Church of England, They must not onely separate (for the very same reason) from *all the Reformed Churches of Europe*; but they must *separate* from *Themselves* too, and from their *separate Congregations*, wherein *some* things *must* be Indifferent. I hope they will not here alledge, They love *Division quatenus ipsum*; and that to *cross* S. Paul's Precept, they love *as much as in them lies to live unpeaceably with all men*; or think it their *Duty* to be *Disturbers*. They will not say, they are obliged to *turn the World upside down*, as once the *Apostles* were said to doe, by *Ill-will*. They will not pretend they are bound in Conscience, to *set up* That *Partition-Wall* our Saviour came to *break down*; and *throw* the World into a *Chaos of Confusion*, worse and wilder than *That*, out of which 'twas first taken.



taken. Nor do I think that they will plead, They were decreed to love *Schism*, and cannot help it. They will not say (whate're some think) that any man's *Avarice* was decreed to midwife *Schism* into the World, for the Love of sweet *Sacrilege*, or other *Spoils*: or that his *Envy* was *Prædetermin'd* to sow the *Tares of Diffension* for sweet *Revenge*: However *Envy* and *Ambition* are as probable Impellents, as any other. For, had *Aërius* been timely made a *Bishop* himself, he had not envied That Order, much less headed a Sect against it. And were our Schismatics *Legislators*, they would inforce such a Conformity, as now they will not forgive, much less comply with. They seem to reckon themselves oppress'd, in that they are not permitted, much less made choice of, to be our Rulers. Which yet by their Principles of Liberty and Conscience, (as They expound them,) they are incapable of being, should we desire them. For if things which are Indifferent are not properly the matter of Human Laws, (as human Laws are contradistinct unto Divine,) Nothing else with any reason can be pretended so to be. For Necessary things are all sufficiently commanded by God already in his Word: and All things unlawfull are There as evidently for-



*bidden*: and things *impossible* are not *commandable* at all. 'Tis very evident that the Former, both affirmative and negative, are the *Divine Laws of God*, and in *no wise human*. So that if our *disobedient* and *Schismatical* Brethren should now be *chosen* or *admitted* our *Legislators*; Then by the *Principles* they are of, (would they be but *true* to them,) there would be but *one Law* (precisely *human*) which They could possibly *enact*, and it must be *This*; *That every Christian man living should be a Law unto Himself*. Every man's *Reason* should be his *Guide*; and every man's *Will* should be his *Reason*. Therefore, according to their own *Principles*, they cannot possibly be our *Rulers*, if we would *have* them. For every man's *Reason* would be his *Royalty*. All *besides* would be *Rulers*, as much as *They*. And so for *Them* to be our *Governours* implies a gross *Contradiction*; by nothing in the world to be avoided, but by their *quitting Their Principles*, and *owning ours*.

Now I am tempted to appeal to our *Schismatics themselves*, whether they are not *ἀναπόλογοι*, Sinners in whose behalf *no Apology* can be made. Whether they are not the *worst* *Reckless*, because the most *unexcusable*. Whether they

they are not *worse* than *Those* who were accused by the Apostle of being tossed to and fro by every *blast*, and *carried about* with every *Wind* of false Doctrin, when (not our Doctrins, true or false, but) even our *Surplices* can *fear* them, and *Organs* blow them out of the Church. Whether it will not be *more tolerable* in the tremendous day of Judgment, for them that *never* were *Members of Jesus Christ*, than for them, who *having been Members*, did *excommunicate Themselves*, and even *cut themselves off* from his *Mystical Body*, which is his *Church*. Whether, when the publick *Safety* cannot evermore subsist without publick *Peace*, nor publick *Peace* without *Compliance* on one side or other, it is not *fitter* that such as *They* should meekly *comply* with their *Superiours*, than that their *Superiours* should *bow* to *Them*? Whether an *yielding* can be made better, than by the *ignorant* to the most *learned*, by the *fewest* to the most *numerous*, by the *Shrubs* to the *Cedars*, or by the *Subjects of Law* to the *Legislators*. Indeed *Obedience* to one another, that is to *Equals*, and *Obedience* to *Inferiours*, or People exceedingly *below* us, might be grievous and vexing with *some Excuse*. However *Christians* are (*in love*) bid to *serve one another*; and *Christ* did *wash*

his Disciples Feet ; and England has had her Saturnalia ; during which, some of the greatest and noblest Masters did indure a *December of Twelve years long*, and did contentedly see their *Servants to bear Rule over them*. But *Obedience to Superiours*, to men above us (not against, but) according to the Laws of Heaven and Earth, (such as was the *Obedience of Christ to Caesar* ; for *Christ* according to his *Manhood* was but a *Su'ject*, though *King of Kings* in regard of his *Divinity* ; and *Caesar* was one of those *Mortal Gods*, who *liv'd like Devils*, and *died like Men*;) I say, *Obedience unto Superiours* whom the Scripture calls *Gods*, is the most noble, and the most natural, and the most necessary Duty ; such as bears up upon its shoulders (by God's Assistance) both the *whole Fabrick of the Church*, and *all the Kingdoms of the Earth*, and of *Heaven itself*. Whereas *Schisms* are *Pioneers*, which digging below their very Foundations, do clearly strive to *undermine and subvert them All*.

§ 15. I have now done with my 4 Reasons, why our *Schismaticks* rather than others, (however scandalous in their Lives,) are singl'd out from the whole *Herd* of Notorious Sinners, to be made the *chief Exemplars of disorderly*

*orderly Walking*, from whom we are most to *withdraw our selves*. These (I say) are the chief reasons, why by this Precept of *S. Paul*, compar'd with Those of *S. John*, and our *Blessed Saviour*, we are chiefly bound to *separate* from *Separatists*. Yet would I not here be thought to mean, that *every Subject* should be a *Judge*, from what *kind of Separatists* (in Civil Conversation) he ought to *separate*. (For publick disorder and confusion might Thence ensue.) But I would be understood to intend Those *Schismaticks*, who are censured by their *Governours* and *proper Judges* to be *Such*. From a civil Commerce with *such* (and a commerce of free *choice*) I think it a Duty to abstain, and to abstain in such a measure, as our *Lord* and His *Apostles* have mark'd out to us.

§ 16. And now I may have done with my *Sermon* too, but that I have remaining an hearty Wish, that our *Separating Brethren* would unpassionately consider Three obvious Truths. First, that if *Obedience* to *Christian Governours* and *Laws* is not really so *essential* to *Christianity itself*, but that still it is possible (as some imagin) that *Saints* may be *Schismaticks*, and *Schismaticks Saints*, Then our *Faith*, and our *Preaching*, yea and our *Scriptures* are all in  
K 3 *vain*.

vain. Welcome *Anarchy* and *Disorder* ; and Farewell to all *Society*. Next, that however *Sin* and *Errour* are very different in themselves, yet a *Wilfulness* in *Errour* does make *such an Errour* become a *Wilfull Sin* too. And the *contemning of Authority*, link'd with an obstinate contumacious *fomenting of Divisions*, is such a Monster, that the *least* *Errour of Judgment* which had been *venial* in *itself*, is by these Aggravations made *great* and *grievous*, and contracts unto itself as well a *Diabolical*, as *Damning* Quality. Thirdly, that *Schism*, were it *no Sin*, were very well worthy the *parting with*, for the purchasing of so pretious and so inestimable a *Jewell*, as *Publick Peace* ; the fruits of which (rightly us'd) are *Piety*, and *Prosperity*, *Strength*, and *Safety*. 'Twas for the purchasing of This, that *S. Paul* had his Compliances with *Jews* and *Gentiles*. 'Twas for This that he *yielded* to circumcise *Timothy* ; and 'twas for This that he *refused* to circumcise *Titus* ; (as well as for the shewing his Christian Liberty and obedience to the Conciliar Constitution Then first Enacted.) 'Twas his great Business and Design, to make the most *adverse* Parties agree in *Christ*. To gain the *Jews* therefore, he deny'd himself the use of his *Christian Liberty* : and as well to win

win the *Gentiles*, he *resum'd* the use of it with equal Care. 'Twas to *unite* dissenting Parties, and make them *meet* in *one Church*, that the *Apostles* (meeting together in a full Council at *Jerusalem*) thought it requisite to *establish* Things *Indifferent* by a *Law*. Thereby giving a *\*Necessity à parte post*, to things *Indifferent à parte ante*. It was to *gain* both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, that our Lord in *some things* comply'd with *Both*. And to hope that our *hitherto-dissenting Brethren*, who now do *enfeeble* and *indanger* both *Church* and *State* by their *Disobedience*, will one day *comply* with their *Superiours* upon the *Reasons* I have given, (if by any fair means they may be brought to their knowledge, and laid before them,) is at present the *greatest Charity* I can have for those men, who are *void of All Charity*, till That is done.

\* AG. 15. 28, 29.

§ 17. *Finally, Brethren, farewell*: and suffer a word of *Exhortation* from *S. Paul* and *S. Peter*, Both joyn'd together. *Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another; love as Brethren, be pitifull, be courteous*: (so *S. Peter* :) to which I add out of *S. Paul*, *καταγίγετε*, *be knit-together* and *compacted*, (so the *Greek*,) or *be ye perfect*, (so the *English*,) because your *being perfect*, must consist in your *being*

1 Pet. 3. 8.

2 Cor. 13. 11.

Phil. 3. 16.

being well knit-together and compacted in one Communion. Therefore walk by the same Rule, and mind the same things, live in Peace; and the God of Love and Peace shall be with you.

*To Him be Glory for ever and ever.*

OF



O F

## CIRCUMSPECTION

## In T H E S I.

E P H. 5. 15, 16.

See that ye walk circumspectly, not as Fools,  
but as Wise, Redeeming the Time, because the  
days are evil.

1. **A**S *Philostratus* once said of *Apollonius*  
*Tyaneus*, & λέγει Ἀπολλωνίης, ἀλλ' ὁδοποιῶν,  
That he writ not his *Life*, but his *Peregrina-*  
*tion*; after the very same manner may I say  
here, The *Life* of man is but \* a *Pilgrimage*,  
and that *Pilgrimage* but a *Walk*; A going up-  
hill on one side, and down-hill on the other.  
First of all he walks up-hill, untill he comes to  
his 30<sup>th</sup>. or 40<sup>th</sup>. year; And from thence he  
walks down-hill, untill he comes to fourscore. For

\* Gen. 47. 9.  
Heb. 11. 13.

L

All,

All, after *That*, is a *Descending* into the *Pit*, (or if it must needs be call'd *walking*,) a kind of *walking* in the *Valley* of the *shadow* of *Death*.

2. First then περιπατεῖτε, be sure to *walk*: do not faintly *lie down*, or yawningly *lean* upon your *Elbows*: \* for your *Journey* is *long*, and your *Time* but *little*. Therefore up, and be doing. Set your *feet* in his *steps*, who went about *doing Good*, and rejoiced as a *Giant* to *run his Course*. For rather than be *benighted*, we must not *walk* onely, but *run* too. So saith the Author to the *Hebrews*; \* *Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that so easily besets us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.*

3. And yet withall we must remember *Vespasian's Motto*, (which deserves to be ingraven in all our *Rings*,) \* ἀσθεν βεβήκως, to *make haste slowly*; that is, to make *no more haste* than may consist with *good speed*. Because the *way* we are to *walk* in is not *sleep* onely, but *slippery*. Therefore look to your *footing*, and mark your *steps* as you *walk* along: for the *footing* of a *David* had well-nigh *slipt*. Nor is the *way* onely *slippery*, but *narrow* too. Nay our Saviour saith farther, (though 'tis not exprefs'd

\* ὁ βίος  
βραχύς, ὁ  
ὅδὸς μακρὴ,  
ὁ χρόνος ὀλίγος.  
Hippocrat.  
Aphor. 1.  
Ἡ ζωὴ ἡ-  
μῶν ἀπὸ  
ὀλίγου ἐστίν.  
Jam. 4.  
Ὁς ἐστὶν  
ἐν, καὶ  
ἐκτός ἐστιν.  
Sophoc.  
\* Heb. 12. 1.

\* Quam im-  
pensè etiam  
Octavius Au-  
gustinus Cesar  
eodem Disso  
delectatus  
fuerit, videre  
est apud Aul.  
Gell. l. 10.  
c. 11. & Ma-  
crob. Satur-  
nal. l. 6.

express'd in our *English* Bibles,) 'Tis ὁδὸς στενὴ καὶ τεθλιμμένη, a way *incumber'd* as well as *narrow*, 'Tis very *difficult* to find it, and very *easie* to tread *aside*. And therefore βλέπετε πῶς, see *how* ye walk. (So it is in the *Greek*, though somewhat otherwise in the *English*.)

4. And then in the next place, βλέπετε πῶς ἀκριβῶς, see *how circumspectly* ye do it, (as it is in the translation,) or see *how exactly*, (as it is in the original.) The word ἀκριβῶς is of an higher signification, than our ordinary Bible doth here express. It imports a *Providence*, and a *Caution*, which being joyn'd with *Circumspection*, make up the *Integral Parts* of a *Christian Prudence*. Now we must walk so *exactly* in all these respects, (with so much *Providence*, and *Caution*, and *Circumspection*,) as not to turn an hair's breadth to the *right* hand, or to the *left*. We must not be *Latitudinarians* in point of Practice; but must rather ὁρθοποδεῖν, walk with such regular and *upright Feet*, as to abstain ἀπὸ τῆς εἰδῆς, in *either* notion of the word; not onely from all the *kinds*, but all the *Appearances* of *evil*.

5. Not at all like those Hypocrites, who are *indulgent* to the *Evil*, and onely *abstain* from the bare *Appearance*; not like Him in the *Epi-*

gram, who put himself to *Death*, for fear of *Dying*; not like the *Pharisees* of the Times, who think it their Duty to *rebell*, for fear of a little *Disobedience*; and greedily swallow the *greatest Camels*, for nothing else but their avoiding the *smallest Gnats*. This is a *foolish Circumspection*, to be so shy of a *Ceremony*, as to run headlong into a *Schism*; and for fear of *Superstition*, to swallow practical *Atheism*. For are not they the *greatest Atheists*, who (to use *S. Paul's* words of the antient *Gnosticks*) profess to know God, but in their works deny him? And They deny him in their works, who quite disown him in his Word, where it calls for Compliance (in All things lawfull) with his *Viceregents*. For sure the same Spirit that saith, *Obey God rather than Man*, doth also say, \* *Submit your selves to every Ordinance of man for the Lord's sake*. The same Spirit that saith, *Call no man Master upon Earth*, and *Be ye not the Servants of men*, doth also say, *Servants obey your Masters in all things, that the Name of God be not blasphemed; nor onely with Eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the Servants of Christ*. Again, the same Spirit that saith, *Thou shalt have no God but me*, doth also say, \* *Obey them that have the Rule over you, and submit your selves, &c. for the Powers that are,*

\* 1 Pet. 2. 13.

\* Heb. 13. 17.

Rom. 13. 1, 2,  
5, &c.

are, are ordain'd of God, and He that *reſiſts*, receives *Damnation*. From all which it follows, that for a Profeſſor of Chriſtianity to *diſobey* the *Laws of men*, under *pretenſe* (rather than *fear*) of *diſobeying* the *Laws of God*, when this is one of God's chiefeſt *Laws*, That we *obey the Laws of men*, ſhews ſuch a ſpirit of Contradiſtion, as 'tis not Charity to indure. We muſt be *circumſpect* of our *ways*, as well as of our *walking*. For a *Circumſpect Walker* in the *ways of Corah*, who dares not do as *God bids* him for *fear of Sin*, and ſhews a Zeal to *ſerve God* by his *Diſobedience*, who craves for Liberty of *Conſcience* to break the *Bonds* of Society, which are the *Laws of the Nation* wherein we live, (that is to ſay, in the Conſequence, for a *Liberty of Conſcience to cut mens Throats*,) and becauſe *the Meek ſhall inherit the Earth*, does think it a part of his *Humility* to ſet his foot upon *Crowns and Scepters*; ſuch a *Circumſpect Walker* is the greateſt Monſter to be imagin'd. He may *profeſs to know God*, as the *Gnoſticks* did; but in his *works* he *denies* him, like any *Gnoſtick*. And as a *practical Atheiſt* is ſtill the *worſt*, ſo ſuch a *Bouteſeux* is the *worſt* of all *practical Atheiſts*. 'Twas by ſo *fooliſh* a *Circumſpection*, and too eaſie a *Connivence* at all ſuch *Folly*, that ſo

many of our *days* have been so *evil*, and stand in need of a *Redemption*. And therefore for the future, *See that ye walk circumspectly, not as Fools, but as Wise, redeeming the Time, because the days are evil.*

6. The words are seasonable and fit in a threefold respect. In respect of the *Counsel* which our Apostle here gives; in respect of the *Occasion* on which he gives it; and in respect of the *Reason* wherewith he does inforce it on those that *read* him. The subject *matter* of the *Counsel* is *Christian Prudence*. The *Counsel* is given upon *Occasion* of great and manifold *Temptations*, whereby a Christian is *ensnared* on every side. The principal *Reason* why it is press'd, is the present *Corruption* of the *Time*. A Time wherein there is requir'd the *Wisdom* and *Wariness* of the *Serpent*, whereby to preserve the *Inoffensiveness* and *Integrity* of the *Dove*.

7. Now though *Prudence* is a thing which does consist of three parts, to wit, of *Providence*, *Caution*, and *Circumspection*, (which though commonly *confounded*, are very *different* in themselves;) yet in the Tenor of my Discourse, I shall keep to the stile of our *English* Bibles; and so far comply with the popular

pular usage of the word, (which is apparently *Synecdochical*,) as to name *Circumspection* in stead of *Prudence*.

8. And first, because our *Inadvertency* appears to be the very *Root*, from which the whole *Stock* of Sin (with all its *Fruit* and its *Branches*) doth seem to grow; βλέπετε πῶς ἀνα-  
εῖς; See how ye walk circumspectly.

9. Next, because there is such a thing, as an *Inconsiderate Circumspection*, for want of a necessary regard both to the *manner*, and *method*, and *measure* of it; See therefore that ye walk circumspectly, μὴ ὡς ἄποροι, not as *Fools*, but as *wise*: ἐν σοφίᾳ περιπατεῖτε, walk in *wisdom*, Colos. 4. 5. And as your *Speech*, so your *Behaviour* is to be *season'd* also with *Salt*, v. 6. Ye must behave your selves *exactly* betwixt your *Scylla* and your *Charybdis*; Corruption of *Soul* upon the *one* side, and Destruction of *Body* on the *other*. But still the *first* and *chiefest* heed is to be taken of the *former*; that the *better* part may be in *safety*, whatever *Disasters* befall the *worse*.

10. And then in the last place, because the *worse* the *Times* are, by so much the *better* and the more *circumspect* men ought to be; Therefore it follows in the Text, Ἐξαγορεύετε τὸ κρείσσον,  
Redeem,



Redeem, or buy out the Season. For it is not *ἡ χρόνος*, the Time at large, but precisely *ἡ στιγμή*, the Nick of Time. And so the meaning of it must be, Be ye sober, and vigilant, and watch at all opportunities; use such Providence, and Caution, and Circumspection, as to fly from Sin on the one hand, and causeless Suffering on the other.

11. This I think may suffice for an *explication* of the Text; and by this a man may easily discern the *Links*, which will make up the *Chain* of my whole *Design*.

12. For first, considering how we are plac'd as so many *Sheep* amongst *Wolves*, we must walk for That reason with *Circumspection*. And then, because there are Errours on *either* hand, as well on the *Right*, as on the *Left*; we must therefore walk circumspectly, *not as Fools, but as Wise*. And this we must do in a threefold respect; to wit, of *Things*, and *Persons*; and *Opportunities*: of *evil* Things, of *evil* Persons, yea of all the very *Occasions* and *Appearances* of evil. Our *walking* is to be *circumspect* in respect of *All* Persons; and as of all *other* persons, so especially of *our selves*. It must be in respect both of our *Enemies*, and our *Friends*; and as of all *other* Friends, so especially of those who

who pretend a Friendship unto our *Souls*. And this must be, as at *all* times, so more especially in *These*. Our *days* being likely to be as *evill* at least in *one* sense, as *the Days* in my Text are said to be *evill* in *another*.

§ 1. Before I can orderly come to speak of Circumspection in *Hypothesis*, as it stands in relation to This or That Station or State of Men, (which to do will be the work of another Text,) I must consider it in *Thesi*, or in the *groß*. And this the rather, as well because it lies first in the order of Nature; as because Heedfulness in the *General* should be as well known to be strictly *necessary*, as *That Triumvirate* of our Enemies (The *World*, the *Flesh*, and the *Devil*,) is universally acknowledged to be *Deceitfull*. And how deceitfull *These* are, one may conjecture even by *This*; That there was hardly ever any such *Golden* age, as had not its portion of *Iron* in it. For no sooner had God Almighty *imprinted* his *Image* upon the *Creature*, than his *Competitor* or *Rival* began to *ingrave* his *Superscription*. No sooner had the *true Coin* receiv'd its *Stamp* from God's *Mint*, but straight the *Tempter* turn'd *Alchymist* to embase the *Metall*. There was a *Serpent* even in *Paradise*; (or else our first Parents had not so soon been kept out

Mar. 14. 68,  
69, &c.  
Gen. 3. 22,  
23.  
2 Pet. 2. 4.

with a flaming Sword ; ) and a *ſtumbling-block* in *Heaven* ; ( or elſe ſo great an Hoſt of Angels had not *ſaln headlong* into *Hell* : ) Yea the bleſſed Converſation of *Chriſt Himſelf* was no ſuch Amulet or Preservative, no ſuch *conquering Prophylaſtick* againſt the *Contagion* of this *Disease*, but that there was a *Peter* to *deny*, yea and a *Judas* to *betray* him. And if theſe things are ſo, That *S. Peter* himſelf, the *firſt* and *chief* of the *Apoſtles*, was not *all his life* ſafe in a ſtate of *Grace* ; Nor the *Protoplaſt* for a *day* in a ſtate of *Innocence* ; No nor *Lucifer* for a *week* in a ſtate of *Glory* ; Lord ! how fitly may any Monitor ſay That to *us*, which our Apoſtle thought *needfull* ( not onely *uſeſfull* ) to his *Ephesians*, *Βλέπετε πῶς ἀνεβήτε*, 'See how ye *walk circumſpectly* ? If 'tis as true in things *ſpiritual*, as it is thought in things *temporal*, That the one half of the world is deceiv'd and cheated by the other ; and that if there are no more than an *Hundred Sects*, *Ninety and Nine* of That hundred muſt needs be ſick of ſome *Impoſture* ; ( unleſs *Chriſt* can be divided, or the Truth of Religion be more than *One* ; ) If in our hovering condition 'twixt *Grace* and *Nature*, we are placed in the Conſines of two implacable Enemies, the *Law in our Members*, and the

Rom. 7. 23.

the Law in our *Minds*, whereof the *one* is still warring against the *other*; And if the Author of this Caveat against *Supineness* and *Nonchalance*, though the great Doctor of the Gentiles, and also a Vessel of God's Election, was yet so brought into *Captivity to the Law of Sin*, (as the 7<sup>th</sup>. to the *Romans* is very commonly understood, though perhaps not so happily as might be wish'd,) that he was forc'd to break forth into That tragical *Ecphonesis*, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this Death!* O then what a *Necessity* must needs be incumbent upon *us*, that we repeat this holy Caveat, and reinforce it on one another, *βλέπετε πῶς ἀπελάσῃτε*, See how ye walk circumspectly? If in many things we offend all, and He who offendeth but in one Point, is someway guilty of all the rest; If an account is to be render'd of every idle word spoken, and sure much more of every wicked one; If none shall enter into life but He that keepeth the Commandments, and life does dwell in That City, to which the Gate is as *streit*, as the way narrow; insomuch that of the Many who seek to enter into life, many shall miss it for all their seeking; If onely He that overcometh shall have the privilege to taste of the bidden Manna, so as the righteous man

M 2

himself

Jam. 2. 10. &  
ch. 3. 2.

Matth. 12.  
36.

Matth. 19.  
17. & ch. 7.  
14.

Luk. 13. 24.

Rev. 2. 7, 17.

1 Pet. 4. 18.

himself shall be *scarcely sav'd*; and all for want of being *heedfull* both of the *way* he *treads* in, and in the *ordering* of his *steps*, and as to the *sureness* of his *footing*; Methinks we need no other Sermon, than the constant repetition of this one Text, (at least 'twere well if This Text were call'd to mind at every Sermon,) *βλέπετε πῶς ἀπειπάτε, See how ye walk circumspectly.* If S. John thought fit to preach *no other Sermon* to the Convert *Eusebius* speaks of, than the *Psalmist's* Resolution of \* *taking heed unto his ways*, which made his Convert not solicitous to be enrich'd with *more Lessons*, whilst he found that *That One* was sufficient of itself to employ him *wholly*; If we live in an Age of so much fallacy and Deceit, and yet for all that of so much Heedlessness and Security, that no abundance of Caution can be too much; It follows then that *This Caveat* cannot be thought upon too much, or inculcated too warmly, or *unexcusably offend* in the Repetition, but that we have such *prurient Ears* as cannot forsooth be pleas'd without great variety, and such *capricious understandings* as will not easily be quieted with *Truth* and *Plainness*; but must have *Altitudes* and *Depths* for their Entertainment.

\* Psal. 39. 1.

§ 2. All our *Sins* and our *Miseries* ſeem to have enter'd into the World at this *one Door*, even *the want* of That *Heed* which is here in-joyn'd. *Other* Defects may be as *fibres*, but *This* is ſure the *Main Root*, (as I ſaid before,) from which the whole *Stock* of Miſchief (with all its *Fruits*, and its *Branches*,) does clearly grow. 'Twas meerly for want of *Circumspection*, that our firſt Parents *fell*; and ſtill 'tis for want of *Circumspection*, that all their *Poſterity* is ever *ſtumbling*. 'Tis but for want of *Circumspection*, that many Profeſſors are ſo *blind as to be led by the blind*, till both the *Leaders* and the *Followers* fall all *together* into the *Ditch*. In the whole *Body of Chriſtianity*, *Circumspection* may fitly be call'd *the Eye*. Now as our *Eyes* are put in our *Heads* to direct our *Feet*; and as good be quite *blind*, as be *always winking*: ſo *Circumspection* in our *Hearts* is to guard our *Actions*; and as good be *none at all*, as *unwary* Chriſtians. For what with thoſe powerfull *Impellents* which Satan uſeth from *without*, and thoſe bewitching *Allectives* where-with he charms us from *within*, we are ſo ſmoothly *drawn aſide* with great contentedneſs into *ſome* dangers, and ſo vehemently *dragg'd* with equall reluctance into *others*, that we do



not onely (like *Janus*) ſtand in need of *four* Eyes, but (like *Argus*) to be *Eyes all over*. And juſt as the Builders of the *ſecond* Temple at *Jeruſalem* were ſo encompassed with Enemies on every ſide, (the *Chaldeans* before, and the *Philiftins* behind, the *Moabites* on the right hand, and the *Edomites* on the left,) that they were taught by their Neceſſity to hold a *Sword* in the *one* hand, for the defending of the *Workmanſhip* which they advanced with the *other*; Even ſo we Chriſtians, who are dignified with the Title of \**Fellow-Labourers with God*, whiſt we are *building up our ſelves in the moſt holy Faith*, and building up our ſelves into *Temples* too, (for *Temples we are of the Holy Ghoſt*,) muſt have *one* Eye upon our *Enemy*, as well as *another* upon our *work*; ſtill looking upward towards *God*, but withall downward towards our *Tempter*; ſtill looking *foreward* towards *Vertue*, but withall *backward* towards *Vice*. We muſt not onely have an Eye unto the right and left hand of our Spiritual *Poyſe* (like a man *walking upon a Rope*,) but like a *Thief* at high *Noon*, juſt in the *Act* of his *purloyning*, muſt look exactly quite *round about* us.

§ 3. And the reaſon of This is extremely evident. For if we onely look *upwards*, we ſhall

\* *Θεοὶ κοινὴ*  
2<sup>de</sup>,  
1 Cor. 3. 9.  
Mar. 16. 20.

1 Cor. 3. 16,  
17.



ſhall be eaſily apt to *ſtumble*, like Mother *Eve*; who, whiſt ſhe fixt her *whole Aſpect* upon the *goodneſſ* of the *End*, did overlook the manifold *Evill* which lay concealed in the *Means*. So præproperous was the *Haste* which ſhe made towards *Knowledge*, that ſhe left *Obedience* behind her back. Or if we onely look *forewards* to ſhun a *Præcipice*, we may at that very inſtant be attack'd *behind* us with a *Wolf*. Juſt as *Judas* was ſo intent upon the *Money* lying before him, that he was *blind* to the *Deſpair* which dogg'd him cloſely at the heels. And we may gueſs by That Threat of God Almighty to the Serpent, [*It ſhall bruise thy Head, and thou ſhalt bruise his heel,*] that commonly the Devil does come *behind* us; and loves to ſurpriſe us in a part the *fartheſt diſtant* from our *Eyes*; that is to ſay, at ſuch a time, as in which we are remoteſt from Chriſtian *Prudence*. Or if we look onely upon the *left* hand for the avoiding of a *Shelve*, we may by our Negligence of the *right* be ſwallow'd up of a *Quickſand*. Like ſome Pretenders to Reformation, who taking heed of *Superſtition*, but nothing elſe, are ſo much the apter to grow *profane*; Taking heed but of *one* extreme, they run into the *other*, which is many times the worſe too; and

Gen. 3. 15.

and to prevent an *Inconvenience* incur a *Mischief*. Thus we see how it concerns us on every side, not to look *upwards* onely, or *downwards*, not onely *backwards*, or *forwards*, not to the *right* hand onely, or to the *left*, but at the same point of Time to be both *provident*, and *cautious*, and even *circumspect* in the letter, which [*à circumspeciendo*] is to carry our Eyes quite *round about* us.

§ 4. Nor must we be onely looking *round*, but be *always looking*. The word is βλέπειν, *See*; But *See* we cannot, whilst we are *sleeping*. And by our Saviour's Admonition, we are to *watch*, as well as *pray*, *lest we enter into Temptation*. So S. Peter to all in General, who are concern'd for their own Safety, does recommend a strict *Vigilance*, as no less requisite than *Sobriety*; and that for this reason, because the Devil is still *awake*, whilst we are *sleeping*. Be *sober*, be *vigilant*, because your Adversary the Devil goeth about as a roaring Lion, (and that by *Night* as well as by *Day*,) seeking whom he may devour. Whom resist stedfast in the Faith. So that in our Christian Warfare, besides the *manning* of our Works, we need our *Scouts*, and our *Countermines*. We must *besiege* our very *Besiegers*; And as that Sophister, *The World*, does

1 Pet. 5. 8.

does surround *us* with *Fallacy*, so must *we* the *World* with *Circumspection*.

§ 5. Nor does the Prudence of a Christian end onely *Here*. For *Circumspection* is to be us'd both in the *manner*, and in the *method*, and especially in the *measure* of being *circumspect*. It being obvious to infer from the following Words, [ *See that ye walk circumspectly, not as Fools, but as Wise,* ] that there is in the World a kind of *accurate folly*, an *inconsiderate Circumspection*, a *capricious* sort of *Wariness*, of which we are also to *beware*. Such as is lying all Night out of Doors, to be sure that our Houses shall not fall upon our heads: Destroying Vineyards, to prevent Drunkenness: Pulling down Discipline and the Hierarchy, to shun the Tyranny of a Pope: Distrusting the Fathers of the Primitive Church, because of Antichrist's being at work in the Apostles own Times: Making the Laws and Law-givers conform themselves to Nonconformity, for fear the Church should want a *Breadth* whereby to support her Superstructure: Eating of nothing but Nuts and Shell-fish, for fear the Cook should be a Sloven. There are some uneasy Souls, who seem at least to be incumber'd with so incomparable a *Niceness*, that under colour of

Eph. 5. 15.

N

respect

respect to the Word of God, they take *The Scripture* to be the *Rule*, I do not say of the *most weighty*, (for so it is,) but even of their *trivial*st and *slightest* Actions; looking on every thing as *Sinfull*, to which the *Plain Word of God* does not immediately *direct* them. From which fundamental Mistake it is, that They dare not call it Wednesday, but the Fourth day of the Week; nor Nine of the Clock, but the Third hour of the Day. A *Surplice* or a *Sacrament* must not be *mention'd*, because there are not such words in all the Scriptures; no more a *Sacrament*, than a *Surplice*. And by the very same reason, (as our judicious Mr. *Hooker* does well observe,) If a Master commands his Servant but to take up a Straw, the Servant shall not be obliged in point of *conscience* to obey, untill his Master has found a Text for that one *particular*. For though the Scripture saith to *Servants*, *Obey your Masters in All things*; yet That Precept is but *General*, and *Dolus latet in Generalibus*, *There are very few Generals which have not a fallacy lurking in them*. Now by such a way of arguing, or at least by one as good, if *Pontius Pilate* was not a *Saint*, because his *Name* is in the *Creed*; at least the *Scribes* and the *Pharisees* must pass for very good.

good men, because they have *their Names writ in the Book of life*. But for the men who thus argue, and are *circumspect* in their walking, not as *wise men*, but *fools*, we can in charity call them no worse than *Hypochondriacs* in religion; men whose *Souls* are directed by the Infirmities of their *Bodies*; and are fitter for the *Pity* than *Indignation* of their Superiours, because the *Distempers* of their *Spleen* may be sincerely thought by *Them* to be the *Scruples* of their *Conscience*. Thus the jealous *Mithridates* stood in such fear of being poison'd, that even his *Meals* were all *Antidote*; and so his Body in tract of time became a *walking Pharmacopæia*. This indeed is a *great*, but an *heedless* Caution. Such as does *cross* and *confute* the Proverb, because *abundance of this is hurtfull*. Some *heed* therefore is to be *taken*, not to be *heedless* and *imprudent* in the extravagant *excess* of our taking heed; and that we do not *deceive* our selves with too immoderate a fear of our being *deceiv'd*.

§ 6. But This is certainly a Caution, to which a small portion of Rhetorick will be sufficient to persuade us. So unapt we are to erre on the *farther side* of This Duty, that our *usual* fault is, we are too much *behither* it. Our

greatest danger commonly is our opinion that there is *none* ; and we are most likely to be *unsafe*, by our too great aptness to be *secure*. Indeed in matters of little moment, concerning the *Body*, or the *Purse*, we need no Sermons against *Security*, or excitations to *Circumspection*. Very few there are that travell in times of danger, without a *Pistol*, or a *Sword* ; or that in places of *infection* will walk the streets without an *Amulet*. Few Families go to bed, till they have made fast their *Doors* ; and in the morning when they arise, their first care is to *shut out Nakedness* and *Hunger*. So that if it were a *Sin* to be in *Poverty*, or a *scandalous* matter to suffer *Pain*, there would be nothing so *difficult*, as not to abound in this Duty of *Circumspection*. But, alas! we do not consider (heedless Creatures as we are) how it fares with our *Souls*, as with so many *Ships*, wherein the very *least Crevices* (if undiscover'd) are too sufficient to *drown* us *all*. And yet how partially we prefer the care of our *Bodies* and *Estates*, before the *Care* and *Concernment* we ought to have of and for our *Souls*, we may conjecture by the *Practice* of the *Physician*, and the *Lawyer*, above That of the *Divine*. For one *Scruple* in the *Conscience*, how *many* are there  
in



in the *ſtomach*? How many *Empiricks* are ſought to, for here and there a ſingle *Confefſor*? and how many *reall Patients* are in all places to be met with, for one *true Penitent*? Be there never ſo *ſlight* an *Ulcer* in any part of the *Body*, we ſtraight deſire the grim Artiſt to uſe his *Corroſive* and his *Probe*; perhaps his *Lance*, and his *Cauſtick* too. But be the *Soul* never ſo *ulcerous*, we are content either with *none*, or a *palliate Cure*. So again it is in the other Inſtance; That though we have little or no ſolicitude about the *making of our Calling and Election ſure*, (which in my Text is expreſſed by *walking circumspectly*; as *Wiſe*, and *not as Fools*;) nor trouble our heads with an *Inquiry*, what ſhall become of us *hereafter*; what kind of Inter-eſt we may have in the Bloud of *Chriſt*; what kind of *Title* we can pretend to the inheriting of a Kingdom, a joyfull *Æternity in Reverſion*, and how we ſhall plead it at the *Aſſizes* which will one day be *held in the Court of Heaven*; Yet be there never ſo ſmall a flaw in any *Title* to an *Eſtate*, Lord! how *ſedulous* we are to have the matter *made up*? How many *Counſellors* are conſulted, and ſet on work, for one *Caſuiſt*? How many *Caſes* are try'd in *Law*, for one in *Conſcience*? I will not call it the



*universall*, but *usuall* Custom, that when *Luke* the good *Physician* has little hope of our *Bodies*, we lend for *Gamaliel* the able *Lawyer*, to take care of our *Estates*. And (That being done,) Then for *Barnabas* the *Divine*, (who is a *Son of Comfort* too,) to make provision for our *Æternity*.

§ 7. Thus we see the most of men have *Circumspection* very sufficient; but 'tis sufficiently *misapply'd* too. And in the Misapplication lies all the Mischief. Just as the *Pharisee* in the Parable was very free of his *Confessions*; But he apply'd them to his *Vertues*, and not his *Sins*. He made confession of his *righteousness*, to wit, his *fasting twice a week*, and *paying Tithes* to a *Pin's-worth* of *Mint* and *Cumin*; He very ambitiously confess'd that he thought himself *holier than other men*, (for which he gave *God* thanks too, and not himself:) But of his manifold *impieties* we do not hear a word from him. So the greatest numbers of men are very *circumspect*, and *wary*: But they are wary of their *Duties*, as of dangerous things; things which probably will betray them to the *dis-friendship* of the *world*; (esteeming *Him* an *imprudent* man, who dares adventure on what is *strait*, when the *Times* are *crooked*; and to stand

stand his old Ground, when *new* is temporally safer, and more in *vogue* too.) Men are wary of loving Enemies, or doing good to such as hate them; very wary how they part with a sinful Pleasure, or send a bill of divorce to a beloved Passion. Extremely heedfull they are and cautious, how they fall from a station of wealth and honour; how they beat down their Bodies, and bring their Flesh into subjection; how they crucify the world unto themselves, and themselves unto the world: (as if there were nothing more ridiculous than That primitive Criterion, by which a Christian was distinguish'd from Jew and Gentile; nor any thing more to be avoided by one of Quality and Parts, than such a seriousness of life, and such a tenderness of Conscience, as may expose him to the Censure of his being little more than a well-bred Quaker.) And as 'tis commonly observ'd of the Lacedaemonians, that they stated the guilt of Stealth, not so much in the Act, as the Apprehension, and therefore reckon'd it a Sin, not to steal, but to be caught: So the greatest heed taken by the Majority of Professors, is not so really to be innocent, as not to be censur'd for being guilty. As if their Prayer were like That of the famous Hypocrite in the Poet,

— Pul-

————— *Pulchra Laverna,*

*Da mihi fallere, da justum sanctumque videri,  
Noctem peccatis, & fraudibus objice Nubem.*

*O my Goddesß, give me the Grace to seem as religious as the best, and to be as deceitfull as may be possible.* The greatest *Mischief* to be avoided in most mens judgments, (if yet their *Judgments* may be judged of by their *Practice*,) is not the *ocular Sin*, (I mean the *Eye full of Adultery*,) but the *auricular Confession*; Not the *Protestant's Impiety*, but the *Popery* of making it *known*. Now such as These should be exhorted, not so much to *increase*, as to *direct* their Caution; not so much to make it *greater*, as *wiser* and *better* than heretofore; to change the *Object* and the *End* of their Circumspection; that what is *now* a meerly *Carnal*, may suddainly pass into a *spiritual* and *Christian* Prudence. For this will be to walk circumspectly, *not as Fools, but as Wise*.

§ 8. And for the bringing this about with the greater Ease, we must be *circumspect Walkers* in two general respects: In respect of the *Persons* with whom we are conversant, and in respect of the *Rules* by which we are to be directed. I therefore say in respect of *Persons*, (by way of distinction from all other objects,) be-  
cause

cause our *Days* cannot be *evill*, but as *we our selves* are such : and therefore by *the evill Days* in which it is our Lot to live, must needs be meant the *Evill men* of the Days we live in. And our *Walking* is to be *circumspect*, as in respect even of *all men*, so of *Those* more especially to whom we bear the greatest kindness. (But This is a Point I must refer to another subject of Discourse.) The *Rules* by which we are to walk, not as *fools*, but as *wise*, are especially these two ; *Conscience*, and *Discretion*. And for the better using of *These*, we must warily occur to two grand *Fallacies*, whereby the greatest part of Men are wont to prevaricate with Themselves.

§ 9. Some are so thick of understanding, as to measure their *Conscience* by their *Confidence*; their being lustily *perswaded* a thing is *lawfull*, or *unlawfull*. Esteeming all *without Sin* which is said or done *without Scruple*; and *all things sinfull* of which a *scruple* may be made. Neither discerning any difference betwixt a *Conscience* which is *tender*, and *misinform'd*, nor yet betwixt a meer *numness*, and *Peace* of Conscience. Such were our *Regicides* here in *England*, who, how scrupulous soever in things *indifferent*, were not scrupulous at all in the point of *Murther*;

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But

But ſturdily pleaded at the Bar, that they believ'd they had a *right* to try, and execute their King; and that they did Both in the Integrity of their hearts; it was no more than their *Conſciences* did dictate to them; their *Conſciences* were ſatiſfied in what they did; and by conſequence they would do it, were it for ever to be done. Meaning ſtill by the word *Conſcience*, the *ſtrength* and *ſturdineſs* of their *Opinion*; which might indeed be call'd *Witchcraft*, as well as *Conſcience*; ( I mean with an equal impropriety, and an eaſier pardon to the word.) Thus it was with the *Conſpirators* of our *Gunpowder-Treaſon*, and with the two infamous Murtherers of *Henry the Third* and the *Fourth of France*, who taking *That* for their *Conſcience* which was indeed but their *Caprice*, made no doubt but their *Murthers* were *Meritorious*. And thus it was for ſome time with furious *Saul*, the *Blasphemer* and *Perſecutor of Chriſt*; who grew ſo mad, and transported, with giddy zeal without knowledge, ( as himſelf confeſſed freely againſt himſelf from after the time of his *Conversion*, ) that he thought it his *Duty* to be *deſtructive* of whatſoever was call'd *Chriſtian*. Like Them of whom our Saviour tells us, who thought ( forſooth ) they were *bound* in *Conſcience*

science to execute *Murther* on the *Apostles*, because it was, in *Their Judgments*, to do *God Service*. Where by the way we may observe, how much 'tis every man's duty to *fear himself*, and to *suspect his own Judgment* in divers cases.

§ 10. Now the way to *walk circumspectly* not as *fools*, but as *wise*, and to free our selves from That Fallacy, which is so generally swallow'd by other men, is first to consider *what Conscience is*, (a thing the most *talk'd of*, but the least commonly *understood*, of any principle or faculty to be imagin'd,) and after *That* to be carefull how we walk by that *Rule*. For whilst the Rule itself is *false*, the *Circumspection* must needs be *foolish*, and can onely serve to make us the more *disorderly Walkers*. *Conscience* indeed is the Rule of *Action*; But to be sturdily *perswaded* a thing is *lawfull* or *unlawfull*, is not at *any* time the *Rule*, and not at *all* times the *work* of *Conscience*. For *Conscience* is not a *Perswasion*, but *Knowledge* rather; Nor is it *any kind* of knowledge, but *knowledge compared with a Rule*; (as *συνείδησις* in the Greek, and *Conscientia* in the Latin, do Both import :) And yet how many of those men who pass for *Instructors of the Ignorant*, and *Eyes to the Blind*, are wont to use the word *Conscience* (before the



people, and to themſelves,) by that dangerous *Catachreſis* I juſt now mention'd? But before I ſay fully what Conſcience *is*, I proceed to ſhew what it is *not*. I ſay, it is not a being ſo fully perſwaded in our minds, as not to have any *regret* or *ſcruple*; to be void of all *Doubt*, or *heſitation*; for we know the *Sear'd Atheiſt* has none of *That*. And when our Saviour *Chriſt* ſaid, *The time cometh that whoſoever killeth you, ſhall verily think he does God Service*, he did not mean, they ſhall be *conſcionable Murtherers*, or *Perſecutors of Men* in the fear of God, and ſo ſhall break the Commandment in the *Integrity* of their *Hearts*; (for *That* had been to ſay, They ſhall be *innocently guilty*, which had flatly imply'd a *contradiction in Adjeſtio*.) But his meaning was clearly *This*, that ſome mens *hearts* ſhall be ſo *hardned* through the *Deceitfulneſs* of *Sin*, as to miſtake the very *worſt* for the *beſt* of actions. Their *Underſtandings* ſhall be ſo *dark*, and their *Souls* ſo *benighted* with their cuſtomary impieties, as to *grope* after *Murther* inſtead of *Sacrifice*. Juſt like them of whom we read in the *fiſt* of *Eſa*, (lately match'd with the Readers and Admirers of the *Leviathan*,) who had ſo loſt the diſtinction of *right* and *wrong*, as to put *evill* for *good*, and *good* for *evill*.



*evil, bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter, darkness for light, and light for darkness.* The Custom of Sin had so *paſſ'd* their *Palates*, as that they had utterly *loſt* their *Taſt*. Now it is not a *satisfied*, but *ſeared* Conſcience, which is not ſtartl'd at ſuch impieties. As many *ſilly* mens Conſciences are *too full* of ſcruples, not becauſe they are *tender*, but *ill-inſtructed*; ſo many *wicked* mens Conſciences are *void* of ſcruples, not becauſe they are *clear*, but *callous*; and ſo muſt every thing be that is *cauteriz'd*. Yea give me leave to ſay farther, Many *deſperate Malefactors* have mounted the Gibbet *without regret*, not ſo much becauſe they had *no ſcruples* in their *Conſciences*, as rather becauſe they had *no Conſciences* to be *ſcrupl'd*; ſince one that's *ſear'd with an hot Iron* (to uſe the figure of our Apoſtle) is in effect *none at all*.

§ II. For (to ſhew briefly what it *is*, having ſhew'd largely what it *is not*,) A Man's Conſcience is his *Knowledge* of what he has *done*, or *not done*, which the known *Law of God* (written *within* him, or *without* him,) has either *commanded*, or *not commanded*; and ſo by conſequence 'tis a *Witneſs* either *for* him, or *againſt* him, after the meaſure that he has *done*, or has *omitted* to do his Duty. From whence it fol-

lows unavoidably, That as *Conſcience properly ſo call'd* is the *Rule of Action*, ſo the known *Law of God* is the *Rule of Conſcience*. And from hence again it follows as unavoidably as before, That for any man to ſay he is *bound in Conſcience*, (as we know who did in the worſt of times,) not onely to *covet* his Neighbour's goods, but at once to *kill*, and to take *poſſeſſion*, (the thing with which the holy Prophet upbraided *Ahab*,) is as much as to ſay in directer Terms, That he *thinks* it his *Duty* to be a *Devill*.

And ſo much for the firſt Fallacy, by which a Multitude of men are led indeed to *walk circumspectly*, but as *Fools*, and not as *Wiſe*, becauſe againſt the true *Notion* and *Rule* of *Conſcience*.

§ 12. And as ſome do thus fooliſhly offend againſt *Conſcience*, ſo do others againſt *Diſcretion*. For many Profeſſors are very *willing* to be in poſſeſſion of the *End* of their Chriſtianity, who yet are very *unwilling* to uſe the *Means*. They would with all their hearts *embrace* the *Service of Chriſt*, but *not abſtain* from  *thoſe things* with which his Service is *inconſiſtent*. Deſirous they are to *do the thing that is good*; but they cannot abide to *depart from evill*. Or if they have a *woulding* to ceaſe from *That* too, yet

yet they are *fond* of the *Occasions* which still do *tend* and *lead* towards it. There is nothing in the world either more *serviceable* to *Satan*, or more *pernicious* and *destructive* to the *Kingdom* of *Christ*, (which he would gladly set up in the Souls of men,) than That most *pleasant*, but *killing* Fallacy, which the far greatest part of men are wont to impose upon themselves, [*That they need not scruple at the doing whatever is lawfull to be done, and has not anything in it which can be properly call'd Sin.*] A fallacy the apter to be swallow'd down glibly, (and that by good *Logicians* too,) because it *delights* whom it *indangers*; and as it finds men *dispos'd* (yea greedily *willing*) to be *abus'd*, so it makes them *well-pleas'd* with the *hurt* it does them; as being *suitable* and *compliant* with all the *Appetites* of the *Flesh*. When men are tempted to do a thing which is not formally unlawfull, as being nowhere forbidden by God or Man, they will not be at the *pains* to *meditate* about the *Tendency* and *Byas* of such a thing. For it would rob them of the *pleasure* they take in Sin, if they should patiently admit but of this one Consideration, (which is commonly distastfull and irksom to them,) That there was hardly ever any *unlawfull* thing, which did not arise from  
the

the Admission of something or other that was lawfull. Yea that sometimes the *greatest* and *damning'st* Sins have taken Rise from the *least* and *most contemptible* Occasions. I shall at once make it *plain* and *usefull* too by some examples; and that especially out of Good will unto the younger, and more illiterate, and less considering part of Those that shall chance to read me.

§ 13. No doubt 'twas lawfull enough for Eve, at least to *look upon* the fruit which was forbidden, (for God forbad her onely to *eat* it;) And as lawfull for her it was, to lend the Serpent an empty *bearing*; (that is to say, upon condition she did not give him her *Assent* too;) But how much happier had it been, if, like *Ulysses* in the *Odysses*, she had *stop't* her very ears against the Voice of That *Charmer*, and had not suffer'd her self to *look*? For her *Eye* and her *Ear* became the *Panders* to her *Palate*, and then her *Palate* betray'd her *Heart*. Holy men have This property, (says *Gregory* the Great,) *Quòd ut semper ab illicitis longè sint, à se plerumque etiam licita abscindunt*; That they may still be far enough from doing any thing unlawfull, they abstain from many things which are lawfull too. Certainly *Job* could be no such

*Ideot,*

Greg. Mag.  
Dial. l. 4.  
c. 11. fol. 37.

*Ideot*, as to think it a thing *unlawfull* for a man to look upon a Maid, who yet did *covenant not to do it*, not onely with his *Heart*, but with his *Eyes* too. Nor may we think it was for nothing, that *S. Paul* so solemnly did distinguish betwixt things *lawfull*, and things *expedient*: clearly intimating unto us, that there are very many things to be left *undone*, not because they are *unlawfull*, but onely because they are *unfit*; not because they are actuall Sins, but because they easily may become so; not because they are *vitious*, but *dangerous* things. And it belongs to *Circumspection* or *Christian Prudence*, to mind the *Counsell*s of Scripture, as well as *Precepts*: as, not to approach the very *Door of an Harlot's House*; to *hate* the very *Garment spotted of the flesh*; and *not to stand in the way of Sinners*. We may not be *Haunters* of the *Tavern* and other places of *Debauch*, because there are *some* who come out *sober*; But rather of the two we must beware of such Places, because there are *others* who come out *drunk*. For 'tis a *mocking* of *God*, and a *reproaching* of *our selves* too, to *run* without warrant upon *Temptation*, and at the same time to pray, *Deliver us from evill*. We know that many most tender Parents correct their Children, not onely for doing what is

P morally

Prov. 5. 8.

Jude 23.

Psal. 1. 1.

morally evill, but meerly for coming in *Harm's* way; for not being so *Circumspect*, as to be afraid before they are hurt. And though no doubt it is barely *lawfull*, for a man to walk upon a *Præcipice*, or to stand on a *Pinnacle* of the *Temple*; yet whosoever dares do it deserves a *Rod*. We cannot say it was *unlawfull* for *Herodias* to dance, or for *Herod* sitting by to behold her motions; But yet *Herodias* and *Herod* were both deservedly to be *blam'd*, because if She had not *danc'd*, nor He *beheld* her, she had not so easily (as she did) *stoln* his heart out of his *Bosom*, and Then the Innocent *Baptist* had kept his *Head* upon his *Shoulders*. Will any man say it was *unlawfull*, for the women of *Israel* to *bold up* their *chins*, or set one foot before another? But yet God *smote* them with *\*scabbed heads*, because they *minced* their steps as they went along, and because they *walked* with *stretched-out Necks*. It was not certainly *unlawfull* for Mother *Monicha*, (the famous Mother of *S. Augustin*;) to drink a cup or two of *Wine* now and then with her Neighbours; But yet by little and little *practice* grew into a *Custom*; and *Custom* justled out *Judgment*; and so she grew out of *Permission*, into *Delight*; an arrant *Wine-bibber* at last, and vulgarly *known* so to be; sadly

\* Isa. 3, 16,  
37.



ſadly purchaſing unto her ſelf the odious Title of *Meribibula*. Which, without more Examples, may ſerve to teach us, with what kind of *Circumspection* we ought to *walk*, to ſave our ſelves as from the *Mixture*, ſo from the *Neighbourhood* of evil.

§ 14. And being thus far ſecur'd from the two grand Fallacies of which I ſpoke, with which there is hardly any thing commoner than for Chriſtians to *couzen* and *cheat Themſelves*; We have found the way to *walk circumspectly* by the Rules of *Conſcience*, and of *Diſcretion*; or (as our Apoſtle does here expreſs it) not as *Fools*, but as *Wiſe*. And truly upon a ſuppoſal, that as many as have *heard*, have alſo *minded* what I have ſpoken, I think I have ſpoken at leaſt enough of the *previous part* of my Deſign, which was onely to diſcourſe of *Circumspection in Theſi*. To conſider it in *Hypotheſi*, 'twill properly belong to another Text, and muſt therefore be deferr'd till another Time.





O F  
CIRCUMSPECTION  
In HYPOTHESI.

MATTH. 24. 4.

*Take heed that no man deceive you.*

§ 1. **T**HE words in general are the\* *Preface* of our Saviour's *Answer* to his Disciples. Their *Question* was, *what the Signs of his Coming should be*, (v. 3.) Which *Coming* of his having a double Signification, either the *end of the Age*, (as the *Greek* imports,) or else the *end of the World*, (as we commonly read in our *English Bibles*,) This *Inquiry* of the Disciples may have in proportion a *double Prospect*. The *first* and more *immediate* on the *Destruction* of the *Jews*; the *second* and more *remote* on the *Day of Judgment*. And 'tis possible that the

\* Non primis  
verbis respon-  
det ad ea de  
quibus fuerat  
interrogatus;  
sed illud pri-  
mum admo-  
net, quod in-  
primis fuerat  
observandum,  
nè imposturis  
hominum ab-  
ducamur à  
fide.  
Clarius in  
locom.

*Prognosticks* our Saviour gives them may be equally applicable to Both acceptations of his *Coming*; as well to the *Scepter's departing from Judah*, which in the Prophecy of *Jacob* should be when *Shiloh* was fully come, as to the *End of All things*, when *Christ* shall come with his *Holy Angels*, to judge the *Secrets of all mens Hearts*.

I have so very good Authority for Both these Notions, that I am not very willing to leave out *either*, although I cannot but in Judgment prefer the *first*: and that as for many other reasons, (too many, and too long to be here inserted,) so more particularly for *one*, in which the words of *This Text* are more particularly concern'd. For I observe Three *Periods* or *Parts of Time*, pointed at by our Saviour in several parts of this Chapter: in the first of which he gives warning of *bare Deceivers*, (v. 5.) in the second of *false Prophets*, (v. 11.) in the third of *false Christs*, (v. 24.) such as would set forth themselves in so *plausible* a manner, with so *bewitching* a *Parade*, and such astonishing advantages of *Signs and Wonders*, as to *deceive* (if it were possible) the very *Elected*. had not our Saviour countermin'd them with an *idè de régence*, Behold, I have told you before they

V. Tertull.  
de Prescript.  
adversus Ha-  
res. cap. 45.

they come, (v. 25.) and with a βλῆπετε in my Text, *Take heed that no man deceive you.*

§ 2. Now if to satisfy the Desire and Curiosity of the *Inquisitive*, I may examin and give account, who the *Deceivers*, and the *false Prophets*, and the *false Christs* were by Name, whom our Lord in this Text may seem in particular to *intend* or *allude unto*; The first I find was \* *Simon Magus*, who call'd Himself *The Power of God*; and *Helena*, his Harlot, A piece of Deity, flown forsooth from *His Bosom*. He was a very bewitching Sorcerer, in great Esteem with the Emperour *Claudius*, and worshipt by many as a *God*. Nor would he be thought to be onely *one*, but *every* Person in the Trinity; The *Father* in *Samaria*, The *Son* in *Judaea*, The *Holy Ghost* among the *Gentiles*. Yet This was That *Simon* who is said to have *believed*, and by the Sacrament of *Baptism* had been admitted into the Church. *Act. 8. 13.* Such another was *Dositheus*, who call'd himself *The very Christ*. A third was *Menander*, who would needs have been thought The common *Saviour of the world*. A fourth was *Barchochebas*, who preached up himself as *The Messias* that was to come, and whom the *Jews* were Followers of, as of I know not what *Star dropt down from Heaven*. These were

\* Origen  
contra cels.  
l. 2. A. 8.  
10.  
Euseb. Hist.  
Ecel. l. 2.  
c. 12. & l. 3.  
c. 20. & l. 4.  
c. 6.  
A Claudio  
Cels. honora-  
tum, à multis  
quasi Deus  
glorificatus  
esse dicitur.  
Docuit se esse  
qui inter Ju-  
daeos quasi Fi-  
lius apparue-  
rit, in Sama-  
ria quasi Pa-  
ter descende-  
rit, & in re-  
liquis genti-  
bus quasi Sp.  
Sanctus ad-  
ventaverit.  
Helenam pri-  
mam ejus u-  
xorav fuisse  
dixit, & ge-  
nerasse Ange-  
los & Po-  
restates per  
quos Munda-  
rum hunc  
factum esse  
ait. Iren. l. 1.  
c. 20.

\* Πᾶς ὁς ἀν  
μὴ ὁμολογῇ  
Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ  
ὡς κυρίου ἐλη-  
λυθέναι, Ἀν-  
τίχριστός ἐστι.  
Polycarp. ad  
Philippens.  
p. 20. 1 Joh.  
4. 3.  
Euseb. l. 2.  
c. 20.  
Iren. l. 1.  
c. 25. & l. 3.  
c. 3.

\* Euseb. l. 3.  
c. 23.

Iren. l. 1. c. 1.  
& c. 24.

\* Epiph.  
Har. 20.  
a Hieron. lib.  
de Script. Ec-  
cles.  
Augustin.  
Har. 6.  
b Euseb. l. 4.  
c. 7. & l. 6.  
c. 28.

were \*properly false Christs. Then for Deceivers and false Prophets, who are alluded to in the Text, I shall but name some of the Chief. One was *Theudas* in the Time of *Claudius*, who pretended to separate the Waters of *Jordan*, as *Moses* Those of the *Red Sea*. *Ægyptius* was another in the Time of *Nero*, who (with 30000 Followers) was by *Felix* cut off at the Mount of *Olives*. A third was *Ebion*, who contended that *Jesus Christ* was an arrant Man, the offspring of *Joseph* as well as *Mary*. \* A fourth was *Cerintus*, who taught his Followers to expect a *Thousand years of Sensuality*, which (forsooth) were to commence from after the general Resurrection. (The like to which was said of *Papias*, who had been Scholar to *S. John*.) A fifth was the Sect of the *Nicolaitans*, who exhorted their Disciples to the promiscuous use of *Wives*. A sixth was *Carpocrates*, and all his *Gnosticks*, (for \**Nicolaus* bred some, and a *Valentinus* bred others,) who commended *Unclean-ness*, as one great Requisite to Man's Redemption. (meaning his being freed from his Confinement to The Body.) A seventh was <sup>b</sup>*Basilides*, who held it lawfull in Times of Triall, to renounce the Doctrin of the Gospel, and did set up in *Ægypt* an open School of this Heresie: which

which was afterwards espoused by the \* *Helcheseitæ*. An eighth was *Saturninus*, who did the like to this in *Syria*. And though some of these did flourish after the sacking of *Jerusalem*, yet the *Jews* received *Massacres* even after that time of their *Desolation*. Witness *That* in the Days of *Hadrian*, whereof *Barchocbebas* was the occasion. For God it seems had design'd them to such an absolute *πρωληβεια*, such a *Consumption of the whole*, that even their *Ruins* were to be *levell'd*, and their *Graves buried*. They were prohibited by *Hadrian*, to do so much as to *look* on their Native Country. Yea *Jerusalem* was decree'd to be called *Ælia*, and its *Name* to be blotted out from the Common *Register of Time*. So that *All* those *Deceivers* I just now mention'd, were either the *Harbingers*, or the *Attendants*, of That so matchless a *Devastation*; and did *literally* fulfill this famous Prediction of our Lord, in the 5<sup>th</sup> the 11<sup>th</sup>. and 24<sup>th</sup>. verses of this Chapter.

§ 3. All which being premis'd by way of *general Explication*, may serve to guide our *Attentions* into Three Subjects of Discourse.

First, an *Heedfulness*, and *Prudence*, to which our Saviour thought fit to exhort his *first Followers*; the Exhortation as it were reaching,

Q through

\* Euseb. ibid.  
Iren. l. c. 1.  
22. 23.

Judaia nec  
Advena-  
rum jure Ter-  
ram patriam  
saltem vesti-  
gio salutare  
conceditur.  
Tertull. in  
Apol. c. 21.  
p. 45.  
Euseb. l. 4.  
c. 6.

through *Them*, to *Us*. βλέπετε, *See*, or *Take heed*.

Secondly, the *Danger*, or *Ground* of *fear*, which more particularly calls for this Christian *Prudence*. To wit, the *Multitude* of *Deceivers* gone abroad into the *World*; which by their *Subtilty*, and their *Number*, will be so likely to prevail, that there is no little need of our greatest *Care*, μή τις ἡμᾶς πλανήσῃ, lest any *Man* deceive us.

Lastly, the *Time* is very observable, wherein the *use* of this *Care* will be most in *Season*: and this we may gather from the Context to be before a *Destruction* of *Church* and *State*. For *Imposture* and *Deceit* will be *Then* most rise, and therefore the *Prudence* of a Christian will be *Then* most needfull.

The *first* Observable of the Three I have insisted upon at large on *another Text*; whereon I shew'd the strict necessity of *circumspecti Walking* in the *Generall*, in respect of *evil Things*, and all that have *Tendency* unto evil.

It now remains that I proceed to the *second* Observable I propos'd; and so to consider *Circumspection* or *Christian Prudence*, as relating in *Particular* to the Deceitfulness of *Persons*. Nor can it be severely imputed to me, if still I continue to deal in *Caveats*. For,

§ 4. If ever there were an *Error* to be commended



mended out of a *Pulpit*, it is the *right-banded* Error of *too much Caution*. And if ever there can be *any*, *This* is certainly the *Time*, when no abundance of *Caution* can be *too much*. When perhaps the very *greatest* a man can *use*, may prove the very *least* he shall stand in *need of*. At least I take *This* to be a satisfactory reason, why having spoken enough already of Christian Prudence *in Thesis*, I am led by the love of Method to consider it also *in Hypothesis*; as it stands in relation to this or that Station and State of *Men*. For as *Charity* is the *greatest* of Christian Virtues, so (in a secular Consideration) 'tis the most *dangerous*, and *ensnaring*, and the most *difficult to be managed* of all our Duties; because it has *This* peculiar to it, *that it thinketh no evil; but beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.* (1 Cor. 13. 5, 7.) I will not say it is the *weakness* or *fault* of Charity to be *Credulous*; But yet exposing its *owners* to many *Risques*, and *Inconveniences*, it stands in need of great *Prudence* to keep it *safe*. The Disciples therefore did very wisely, in being *afraid* and *suspicious* of *Paul himself*, till *Barnabas* gave him a *Testimonial*, that by his *preaching boldly at Damascus*, and by his *disputing against*

Act. 9. 26.

ver. 27, 29.

Joh. 2. 23, 24.

\* Matth. 10.  
16.

the Gracians, he prov'd himſelf an *unfeigned* Convert: as if the *repentance* of an *Enemy* were never to be *truſted* untill 'tis *try'd*; nor any other *Triall* could be *ſufficient*, but That of *bringing forth fruits meet for repentance*. Our Bleſſed Saviour himſelf would not *entruſt* himſelf with ſome who *believed in him*; becauſe he *knew* their *Belief* was ſuch, as would not bear any *ſtreſs* in a time of *Triall*. Seeing the *Miracles* which he did, they *believ'd in his Name*: but he *knew* that they were not *Temptation-proof*; that they would not *hold out* at his *Crucifixion*. How much more might his *Apoſtles* be diſtruſtfull of Believers, who knew them *not*? And yet ſo *unguarded* was their *Simplicity*, (I mean the *Simplicity* of the *heart*, not of the *head*, or the *underſtanding*; as oppoſed onely to *knavery*, and not to *knowledge*;) that they made their *own* Innocence the uſual meaſure of *other mens*. Hence it was that their *Maſter* did call them \* *Sheep*; becauſe they knew not, till he had told them, that they were going out *as Sheep in the miſt of Wolves*. And the more he had obſerv'd they were *unapt* to be *ſuſpicious*, by ſo much the rather did he exhort them to uſe the *wiſedom* of the *Serpent*, whereby to ſet a conſtant *Guard* upon the *Innocence* of the Dove.

*Dove.* For as *Wisdom* is \* *devillish*, without *Simplicity*, so *This*, without *Wisdom*, is never *safe*. It is the *property* of the *one*, *not* to do any *Injury*, and the *benefit* of the *other*, is *not* to *suffer* it. Indeed as *Fear* is oppos'd to *Fortitude*, it is a *childish unmanlike* *Passion*; still *betraying those succours which reason offereth*. Again, as *Fear* is oppos'd to *Faith*, it is an *beathenish* and *carnal* *Passion*; That that made so many *Compliers* in the evil days pass'd, with the *Spirit which Then was working in the prosperous Children of Disobedience*. But as *Fear* is oppos'd to *Folly*, (I mean *Imprudence*, and *want of Heed*;) it is at once a very *generous* and *Christian* *Thing*. There being no true *Faith*, no nor any true *Fortitude*, which has not a *mixture* of such a *Fear*. As *Fear* is opposite to *Reliance* and *Trust in God*, it is indeed a *great Duty* to *laugh* at *Danger*: But as 'tis opposite to *Rashness* and a *defect* of *Circumspection*, it is as much a *man's duty* to provide *against danger* by *timely fear*. For the same *Spirit* that saith by the *Royal Priest*, *Fear not them that can kill the body*, does also say by the *Royal Preacher*, *Happy is the man that feareth always*. All which being compared with the *Importance* of my *Text*; and the

\* Jam. 3. 15.

Wisd. 17. 12.

Eph. 2. 2.

Matth. 10. 28.

Prov. 28. 14.

evill of *those* days, which in the Context are spoken of, being duly compar'd with *these* I speak in, (for in truth the *whole Chapter* which lies before us may very well serve for an *Englisb Mirroir*, wherein our Modern Deceivers may partly see how they look;) I think I may say (without impertinence) to the most prudent Congregation, what our *Saviour* esteemed needfull, not onely pertinent to his Disciples, βλέπετε, See, or take heed: and βλέπετε ὑποὶ τῷ πλανῆσαι, Take heed ye be not deceived: and βλέπετε μή τις, Take heed that no man deceive you.

§ 5. That thus the Emphasis is to be put, I am confirm'd in my opinion from *other* words of our Lord to his 12 Apostles, when being about to send them abroad to an inhospitable world, he did not speak in this manner, (which yet he might very well have done,) Beware of *those foolish and hurtfull Lusts, which drown the Soul in misery and perdition.* Nor did he choose to say Thus, (which he might very well have done too,) Beware of the Inticements of worldly Greatness, of Riches, and Pleasure, and Reputation. He did not say, (with S. Paul,) Beware of Dogs; Nor yet, (with S. Peter,) Beware of Devils: But (as a greater Mischiefe than either,) Beware of Men.

*Men.* (*Matth.* 10. 17.) For as Deceitfulneſs, and Fraud, and all the dire effects thereof, do give us a very true Character of the *Greater World*; ſo *Man*, being a *little world*, is a *little world of Deceits* too. The falſeſt *Crocodile* in *Egypt* is not *Hypocrite enough* to become his *Embleme*. The reaſon is, becauſe the *beſt* things debauch't are the moſt *transcendent evils*. Thoſe *Angels* that fell from as high as *Heaven*, could not therefore fall leſs, than as *low* as *Hell*. And ſo *Angelical* was the Nature of *Man undeprav'd*, by injoying a Rectitude both of *Intellect* and *Will*, that he admitted not of a *middle* betwixt a *Devil*, and a *Saint*. So that *Man's* being the worſt on this ſide *Hell*, as well as the *beſt* of *God's* Creatures on this ſide *Heaven*, does help to *adjust* and *reconcile* the ſeeming *contradictory* Proverbs, \* *Homo Homini Deus*, and *Homo Homini Diabolus*. *Man to Man* is a kind of *God*, and *Man to Man* is an arrant *Devil*. All the reſt of our Fellow-creatures are very *innocent Neighbours*; Nay, whenſoever we have occaſion, they are our moſt obedient and faithfull *Servants*. But *Man to Man* (for the greateſt part) is either a very *fierce Enemy*, and ſo the worſt of *Wild Beaſts*; or elſe a very *false Friend*, the worſt of *Tame ones*.

\* Μῆνιν ἀντὶ  
 Κίρκην ἀν-  
 ὄρωρε, μῆνι  
 ἀνάντην, ὅ-  
 ταν ἀντὶ δ-  
 ιαβόλων.  
 Polyb. Hiſt.  
 l. 1. c. Le-  
 gat. 122.

Ὁ ἀνθρώπος  
 πῶς ἐστι μὴ  
 τυχεῖν, ἀ-  
 γκαῖαται  
 πῶς, πῶς  
 τῶν, ὅταν γῶ  
 τῶν. Plato  
 de Legibus  
 l. 6.

Ὁς χάριεν  
 ἐς ἀνθρώ-  
 πον, ἀν-  
 ὄρωρε ὁ  
 ἀνθρώπος ὅ-  
 ταν ἀντὶ δ-  
 ιαβόλων.  
 τὴ μάχην  
 ἀνάντην.

§ 6. So

§ 6. So far therefore as we are *men*, I think our first and greatest *head* is to be taken for *our selves* against *our selves*. Not for *this* Reason onely, because we *love* our selves *most*, and so are *most* apt to *deceive* our selves; (the Devil commonly using *us*, as the Empress *Agrippina* her husband *Claudius*, whilst she poyson'd *That Dish*, with which she knew he was *most delighted*, and on which he was likely to make the *plentifullest Meal*; ) But withall because the *Soul*, like the *Eye* of *Man*, is *least* of all able to see *itself*. And this I think the *best* Moral, (though I know there is *another*,) of *Diodorus* his Mythology concerning *Lamia*, who did *put* on her *Eyes*, when she went *abroad*; but always coming *home*, *put them up* into her pocket. We are blind to the greatest *Beam*, if it be in our own *Eye*, though we can *spy* the least *Mote* in *another man's*. Nor is it onely the *Eye*, but the *Heart* of *man* also (if we believe the Prophet *Jeremy*) is *deceitfull* above *all things*. And this is that which makes him his own *worshiper*; whilst either he falls *without* a *Tempter*, like *Lucifer* in *heaven*; or else (like *Peter* upon *earth*) he is *endanger'd* by a *temptation* from the meer *Confidence* of his *safety*. Amongst a Thousand which might be given, I cannot name

Ἐμβολὸν ἡ-  
σας πῶς ὡς  
οἱς μάρτυ-  
ρον ἡμεῖς οἱ  
τοῦ ὁρῶντος  
μυῖς, &c.  
Diod. Sic.  
l. 10. p. 778.

Jer. 17. 9.

a fitter



a fitter Instance of *Self-Deceiving*, than that of *Eldavid* the *Fanatick* in *Rabbi Mosche Ben Maiemon*: who was so very *sincere* a Cheat in the couzenage of himself, and did so seriously believe he was the *Prodromus* of the *Messias*, that he offer'd to be try'd by a *Decollation*, and died a *Martyr* to his *Delusions*. So much 'tis every man's duty to *fear Himself*, and to suspect his own *Pbantasie*, or *Imagination*, which he takes to be his *judgment* in divers cases.

*Vid. Buxtorph. Tbe-  
saur. Lingu.  
Hebr. qui  
historiam re-  
censet inte-  
gr. m ex libro  
Shevet Je-  
huda.*

§ 7. Next and immediately after *our selves*, we must be circumspect and wise in respect of *one another*. And as of other men in *generall*, (for this very reason that they are *Men*,) so of *Those* in special manner whom we have most of all *trusted*, and most *obliged*; who have mingl'd their *Projects* and *Prayers* with us; who have eaten of our bread, and as it were lain in our very Bosoms; who are apt to *hate* us for the favours they are *not able* to *requite*, and for *exceeding* their *Gratitude*, will not allow us their *Humanity*. Of such ill-natur'd Creatures we read in *Tacitus*, *quibus beneficia eo-  
usque leta, dum videntur exolvi posse; sed ubi  
antevenère, pro gratiâ odium redditur*. Little Curtesies and good turns they take very well, and are thankfull for: But when a Munificence

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is



is excessive, and far beyond their possibility either to *recompense*, or *deserve*, Then they onely love the *benefits*, but perfectly *bate* the *Benefactor*, and with Him Dead, because (according to that of *Aristotle*, αἰχμῶς ὁ δὲ φερεμένῳ,) as often as he sees them, he makes them bluth. Now 'tis very sound arguing from the *Act* to the *Aptitude*; such Things there may be in these our days, because there were such in the days we read of. And special heed is to be taken that we be not deceived by such as *These*; because by *Courage* and *easie Caution* a man may be saved from his *Enemies*; But *God alone* can keep him safe from his dearest *Friends*. Thence said God by the Prophet *Jeremy*, Take ye heed every one of his Neighbour, and trust ye not in any Brother: for every Brother will utterly supplant; and every Neighbour will walk with slanders; their habitation is in the midst of Deceit. So said *Jesus* the Son of *Sirach*, Separate thy self from thine *Enemies*, and take heed of thy *Friends*. *Julius Cæsar* was more endanger'd from *Brutus*, and *Cassius*, his Bosom *Friends*, than from *Antony*, and *Cato*, his open *Enemies*. *Pompey the Great* could never hurt him with all his *Armies*, because he was a brave and a generous Enemy. But his *Friends* were such *Flayls*, as against

Jer. 9. 4, 5, 6.

Eccles. 6. 13.

against which there was *no Defense*. Even the *Serpent himself* was not more treacherous to *Eve*, than *Eve* was unto her *Husband*, and her *Husband* to his *posterity*. For although she derived *Her Body* from *His*, and so might seem in some regard to have been his own *Daughter*, before his *Wife*; (as it were joyn'd to him in Wedlock by a kind of *lawfull Incest*;) yet no sooner had that Woman received *Life* from out his *Side*, than she (in a lamentable Requital) returned *Death* into his *Bowells*. *David* did not complain, *That an open Enemy had dishonour'd him*, or *that an Adversary had magnify'd himself against him*: for (said he) *I could have born the one, and have bid myself from the other*. But his *Gordolium* and his *out-cry* was against his *Companion*, and his *Guide*, with whom he *took sweet Counsell, and walked with as with a Friend in th<sup>e</sup> House of God*. I with it may prove a very groundless and weak Suggestion, that both our *Jesuites*, and their *Journymen*, (passing commonly under the name of *fanatick Protestants*,) are by much the most *innocent*, because they are ἐχθροὶ παρ' ἐχθρούς, (as *Aristotle* words it) the most *undisguised* and *barefac'd Enemies*, at once to the *Monarchy* and *Church of England*. Such as declare them-

Psal. 55. 12,  
13, 14.

Psal. 41. 9.



the best way to *make* men Loyall, was *not* to doubt of their being *such*, most unhappily have died by their *Credulity*. It is indeed a very generous and Princely Errour, (as being the Errour of a Great and a Candid Soul,) not at all to be capable of Fears and Jealousies; and rather to run the greatest Hazards, than either to fear, or to be fear'd. But yet the oftener I reflect upon what was once said by a *Duke of Florence*, [ That *He reckon'd All Subjects, who were Principl'd by the Jesuits, would rebell if they could, and therefore* (said he) *for mine, let them do it if they can;* ] And comparing therewith the several Caveats of our Lord, *Be wise as Serpents, Beware of Men;* And considering that *Distrustfulness* is the chief *Wisdom* of the *Serpent*, as well as a necessary *Safeguard* to the *Simplicity* of the *Dove*; Lastly, the less I have been able to free my self from an opinion, that in the Wariness of the Prince the People's Interest and Safety does chiefly stand, (for sure it is our greatest Interest, *not to be able to be damn'd for our Disobedience*, and, by a consequence unavoidable, *not to be able to Disobey* the Lord of Hosts in his Vicegerents,) the more I think there is place for an *Epicharmus*, to bring That Motto to Remembrance,

[μὴ μνησθῆναι ἀπιστεῖν, that is,] forget not to be Distrustful.

Matth. 7. 15.

Vincent. Li-  
rin. cap. 17,  
18, 19.

§ 8. And as of all *other* friends, so *above* all beware of *Them*, who pretend a Friendship unto the *Soul*. For there is *no Devil* to the *white* one. That *Serpent* is the most *deadly*, which covers over his malice with the seeming *simplicity* of a *Dove*. A *Wolf* is ever most *Ravenous*, when cloath'd in *sheep-skin*. Nor is there any such dangerous *Highway-Thief*, as he who follows that trade in the Reverend Habit of a *Priest*. There are no *Jugglers* in the world to be compar'd with *false Teachers*; those *Spiritual purloyners*, who commit a kind of *Burglary* upon mens *Souls*, and even *plunder* their very *Consciences*; who first *steal* into their *Heads*, and carry away from thence their *true Opinions* in point of *faith*; then creep into their *Hearts*, and *steal* away from thence their *right Affections* in point of *practice*. Such as these heretofore were *Nestorius*, *Photinus*, and *Apollinaris*. All three very *learned* and *frequent Preachers*, of eminent *wit*, and *elocution*, highly *approved* by the *Clergy*, as well as *admired* by all the *people*, untill infected with an *Itch* to be the *Authors* of so many *Sects*, or the *Heads* of so many *Factions*, they polluted all their *Excellencies*

lencies with the *Leprosie* of *Error* ; and of three great *Shepherds* became three *Dogs*, whose constant business was nothing else, but to be barking and snarling against the *Truth*. *Photinus* (even with *vehemence*) against the *Trinity* of the *Godhead* ; *Nestorius* against the *Unity* of our Saviour's *Person* ; and lastly, *Apollinaris* against the *Duality* of his *Nature*.

§ 9. From whose examples we may learn, not onely to beware of such as creep into Houses, and there lead captive those Silly women, who again do lead captive their Silly men ; But of such as domineer in their factious pulpits, and like the great Red Dragon in the Revelation, do draw after their Tail, perhaps a whole third part of the Stars of Heaven. (I cannot be thought to speak of fixt, but of erratick and wandring Stars.) The common fallacies of the world do onely couzen the peoples senses, and so impose upon their Reason. But these at first dash do even bewitch their very reason, and so beguile them of their Religion. A spiritual Cheat, or false Teacher, is so incomparably hurtfull ; (especially when his false and seditious Doctrin is such as easily runs out at his fingers ends,) that Lucifer himself, to become such, did first of all turn Devil. For as if his Devilship were his

2 Tim. 3. 6.

Rev. 12. 3.



his *Qualification*, He was first an *Apostate*, and then a *Preacher*. The forbidden *Tree* was his *Text*, forbidden *Knowledge* was his *Doctrin*, Horrid *Rebellion* was his *Use*, and so he concluded with just *Damnation*.

§ 10. Now we shall find such Impostors to have been *still* very *rife*, whether we look into the *Jewish*, or *Christian Church*.

1 Kin. 18. 22.

cb. 22. v. 6, 8.

In the *Jewish* it is observable, that for one *Elijah*, (that *man of God*,) the Prophets of *Baal* were *four hundred and fifty*. For one *Micaiah*, who prophesied *Truth*, four hundred there were that dawb'd with *untemper'd Morter*. The ways of *Apostasy* in *Israel* were chiefly two. The first was the way of *Jeroboam*, who ador'd the true God, but in the similitude of a *Calf*; nor that at *Jerusalem*, but *Dan and Bethel*. In that lay his *Heretic*, in this his *Schism*. The second way was the way of *Ahab*; who besides the publick worship, common to him with *Jeroboam*, did farther worship his *Baalims* or *Godlings* also. Now there was never any *Apostasy*, nor *Idolatry* in *Israel*, in which their *False Prophets* had not still a great hand. No nor any false Prophets who prophesied *Lies*, but they pretended to derive them from the mouth of *Truth*. The work of *Satan* still was done



in *Jehovah's* name. An example of which we have 1 *King.* 22. where though *Abab's* lying Prophets were Prophets of *Baal*, yet still they usher'd in their falsehoods with a [*Thus saith the Lord.*]

Come we hastily from the *Jewish* to the *Christian* Church, which we shall find to have been infested, from her first \**Infancy* and *Childhood*, with such *Deceivers*. A *Simon Magus* was found at *Rome*, to resist the doctrins of *S. Peter*; An *Apolonius* also at *Ephesus*, to check the preachings of *S. John*. Besides *Menander*, and *Cerintbus*, *Barchochebas*, and *Dositheus*, *Carpocrates*, and *Ebion*, *Saturinus*, and *Basilides*, and the most venomous Crew as well of *Gnosticks*, as *Nicholaitans*, (whereof the greatest part did flourish in the Apostles own times, and all pretended to be *Reformers*,) there were not wanting amongst the *Heathen*, who did endeavour the setting up a *New Messias* of their own; and that by craftily diverting the clearest prophecies of the *Old Testament*, from that natural Aspect which they all fasten upon the *New*. *Justin Martyr* in his *Parænesis* to the *Emperour Antonine*, does make this appear by an Induction of particulars. That famous prophecy (for example) of dying *Jacob*, [*The Scepter shall not depart from Judah till Shiloh*

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come,

\* 2 Thess. 2.  
7.

V. Justin  
Mart. sug-  
gav. de  
Avr. p. 70,  
&c.

come, binding his Ass's Colt unto the choice Vine, and washing his Cloaths in the blood of Grapes, Gen. 49. 11. ] which is so manifestly fulfilled in Jesus Christ the Son of God, The Heathen Greeks apply'd to Bacchus, their Son of Jupiter; not onely because his Rites were Solemnized with an *Ass*, and because he was worshipped as the God of the *Vintage*; but because he was feign'd to have been torn in pieces, to have suffer'd many things, and to have enter'd into Glory. So what is spoken by the Prophets of our Saviour's riding into Jerusalem upon an *Ass*, (Zech. 9. 9.) They apply to Bellerophon (another Son of their Jupiter) riding to Heaven upon Pegasus, a winged Horse. And that prædiction of Isaias concerning a Virgin's bringing forth, (Isa. 7. 14.) They will needs apply to Danae in the Brazen Tower; where having carefully been sequestred from the Society of men, and yet for all that grown big of Perseus, she got the fabulous repute of a Mother-Maid. So that passage of the Psalmist, [ He rejoiced as a Giant to run his course, Psal. 19. 5. ] Those Idolatrous Greeks apply to Hercules, whom they affirm to have ran through all the habitable world. And those distinct prædictions of the Prophet Esai touching our Saviour's healing Virtue

Virtue over all manner of Diseases, they apply to *Æsculapius*, their God of Physick. Not to be endless in particulars, All the Prophecies of our *Messias*, excepting that of his *Crucifixion*, (which their Poets could never parallel in all their fabulous Sons of *Jupiter*,) have by the wicked Ingenuity of Deceivers, been profanely misapply'd to the bolstering up of their *Idolatries*, and that by having been wrested from those *Completions* they all do find in our Blessed Saviour. Inasmuch as *without*, and *within* the Church, both under the *Law*, and under the *Gospel*, This has ever been a *pertinent*, if not a *necessary* Caveat, *Be wise as Serpents; Beware of Men; or* *Βλέπετε μή τις, Take ye heed that no man deceive you.*

§ II. We stand in need of This Caveat, in respect of *All* Persons without exception: not onely of the *worst*, but the *Best* of men. For as the *worst* may deceive us by their very *good Words*, so may the *Best* of men too (though without any design, and even before they are aware,) by their *evil Deeds*.

To begin with the *worst*, let us first of all attend unto that Caveat of *S. Paul* to his *Ephesians*, *Let no man deceive you with vain words.* A Caveat extended to many things of great moment, however expressed by our Apostle in the

Eph. 5. 6.

ſtile of *vain words*. He does not mean by *vain words*, ſuch as are but *unprofitable* and *impertinent* to the Hearers ; ſuch as are to no end, and purpoſe : but ſuch as are *filthy* as well as *fooliſh* ; and withall ſuch as are *false*, or *fallacious* words. Such as blind a man's Judgment ; ſuch as pervert his Underſtanding ; ſuch as impoſe upon his Reaſon ; ſuch as miſlead him from the true Faith ; and even couzen him of his Religion. In all theſe reſpects, though in the *laſt* above all, S. Paul is carefull that his *Ephesians* be not deceiv'd with *vain words*.

They who call *fooliſh* or *filthy Talking*, by the plauſible names of *Facetiousneſs*, or *Drollery*, *Urbanity*, or *Burleſque*, are the firſt ſort of ſuch as do deceive with *vain words*. Theſe are called by the Greeks *χαλοποιοι*, and by the Latines *Ridicularii*, in French and Engliſh, *Drolls*, and *Railleurs* ; ſuch as think it a mark of *Wit*, never to ſpeak a *ſerious* word, but to turn all into *Ridicule*. By *fooliſh talking and jeſting*, (two words for one thing) is meant ſuch *inſipid* and *unſavory* diſcourſe, as has not in it any *Salt* either of *Charity* or of *Prudence* to make it uſeſull. 'Tis true that *Ariſtotle* does reckon *ὑπερπαιάν* (which is here S. Paul's word) a *Semivertue* in Converſation. But being uſually coupled with *Scurrility*, or *Obſcœneneſs*, or ſome degree

degree of *Profanation*, (for *mala sunt vicina bonis*,) it is *prohibited*, and *condemn'd*, and heavily *cenfur'd* by our Apostle, as inconsistent with the *seriousness* and the *gravity* of a Christian, whose *Conversation* should be in *heaven*, and his *Joy* in the *Holy Ghost*; not in jesting, and buffonery. Mortification and Repentance and Amendment of life should be His *Business*; and Praising God his *Recreation*. The Study and Contemplation both of the *Wisdom*, and the *Will*, and the *Word* of God, should be his *Labour*, and his *Diversifement*, his daily *Exercise* and *Delight*. To them that place their present happiness in the contrary to This, in *sparing nothing* to break a Jest, neither the holy Word of God, nor the good Names of Men, nor the modest Ears of Women, but sacrifice all considerations to *Sport* and *Laughter*, as to the *Idol* they most *adore*, To Them our Lord's Denuntiation belongs of right, *Wo be to Them that laugh, for they shall mourn and weep*. As for such things as These, impious Jestings to cause laughter, and *filthy Talking*, (v. 4.) *let no man deceive us*, (saith *S. Paul*,) as if they were altogether *Venial*, and such as easily consist with a Christian state: For even *because of These things*, (as arrant Trifles and Peccadilloes, as by too many they may be

S 3                      thought,)

thought,) *the wrath of God cometh upon the children of Disobedience*, either in This, or the World to come.

Again, *Let no man deceive us with vain words*, that is, with *false ones* (saith *Estius*,) or with *fallacious ones* (saith *Menochius*.) And so the Caveat is extensible to All the Deceitfulnesses of Men, who with the Sophistry of words, or *the words of man's Wisdom*, (which is the wisdom of the Flesh,) seek to impose upon the Consciences and minds of those they speak to. As in calling *vitious Fear* by the Name of *Prudence*; in calling *Avarice*, *Frugality*; *Luxury*, *Nobleness*; *Lightness*, *Affability*; *Ambition*, *Greatness of Soul*; *Sheepishness*, *Humility*; *Insultation*, *Courage*; and devilish *Envy*, *Hatred of Evil*. For now and then a great *Vice* does so Ape-out *Vertue*, and several *Vertues* in some degrees do so border upon *Vice*, that for want of due *Heed* to the *vain words* of men, many mistake them for one another. Let no man therefore deceive us (as many will, unless we stand upon our Guard,) by giving *vain Subtilty* the name of *Wisdom*; and *Cruelty* the name of *Corrective Justice*; by calling *Rashness*, *Resolution*; and *Giddiness*, *Zeal*: Let no man lead us into *Intemperance*, under the stile of

Good-



*Goodfellowship*; nor seek to lessen the guilt of *Wantonneſs*, by its being intri'd a *Trick* of youth; nor withdraw our *Obedience* to publick *Parents*, in pretence of *Sacrifice* to God; no nor our *Sacrifice* to God, (when That is due,) because *Obedience* indeed is *better*. Let no man persuade us to leave *undone* the *smallest* Duties, under colour of our *doing* the *weightier* matters of the Law; nor wilfully to admit of a *lesser* Sin, in a sophistical Pretence of avoiding greater. For That saying of *Aristotle*, τὸ ἐλαττωσιον λαττωσιον κακῶν, that of two *Evils* the least is to be chosen, is not meant of two *Moral*, but of two *Physical*, or *civil* Evils. 'Tis true when two *Evils* are Both of *Punishment*, or when of any two *Evils*, the one is of *Sin*, and the other of *Affliction*, Reason prompts us to choose the lesser. But of two *moral* *Evils*, or of two *formal* *Sins*, Religion bids us choose *neither*: But rather suffer the *greatest* evil, than submit to do the *least*.

§ 12. Should I adventure to reflect upon *all* sorts of Men of this first rank, of whom an *heed* is to be taken in this last Age, (though this at first was my Design,) I should heedlessly ingage in a new Sea of matter, and wear out the Patience of all that hear me. I shall therefore choose



choose to spend the little Remainder of my time, in giving notice of two or three of the most *plausible Deceivers*, which seem to have had the chiefest hand in all the Miseries of the late Times. For till the *Errours* they have *sown*, and sometimes *planted*, be *rooted* out of the people's Minds; I cannot imagin how it is possible to *keep* our Peace any *longer*, than whilst the persons so imbued want Power to *break* it.

§ 13. Take we heed then in the *next* place of such Deceivers, as sow the seeds of *Discontent* in their credulous Congregations, by feeding the People with Apprehensions, fears, and jealousies, of *Superstition*, and *Popery*; and *impositions upon Religion by the Commandments of Men*. This has been a sore Evil under the Sun, (ever since the Days of Queen *Elizabeth*,) by *fiction* and *pretended*, to make a Broad way for *real Popery*. When a Protestant resolves to espouse a *Schism*, a Separation from the *most perfect* of *Protestant Churches* in the World, He *must* accuse her either of *Popery*, or of *Papistical Inclinations*, for fear of being found out by all, to *drive a Trade* of Animosities, either for *Revenge*, or for *filthy Lucre*; or for fear of being known to be Satan's chief Journey-man, in being

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passionately *amorous* of breeding *Hatreds*, and a *Lover* of *Schism* as it is *Schism*. Neither *Christ* nor his *Apostles* were used *otherwise* or *worse* than the Church of *England*, whose *Accusations* were adapted to their *Enemies Ends*, which were onely to make them *odious*, and thorowly fitted for *Destruction*; as far from *Truth*, or *Probability*, as *Truth* can possibly be from *Falshood*. Nor could it sure be more impossible, that *Christ himself*, blessed for ever, should be a *Conjurer*, or a *Glutton*, (who yet was accused of being *Both*,) than that *His Spouse the Church of England* should be *Popishly affected*, whose *first Reformers* were put to *Death* for resisting *Popery*, and whose *Sons* at this day are the *Sole Persons* that keep it out, and whose *Communion* is detested by none so much as the *Popish Party*, who are not wont to *bate* men for their *kind affections*. A man would think that *all Protestants* should unite themselves with us, because the *Romanists* will not. A man would think that *no Protestant* should separate from us, because the *Romanists* all do. A man would think our *common Enemies* should make us *Friends*. But when the *Primitive Christians* were to be *baited*, and *torn in pieces*, 'twas but *suitable* for them to be put in *Bears Skins* too. And 'tis as *suitable* for

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our Church to be very *well cloath'd* with the *worst* of *Calumnies*, by such as *aim* at her *Ruin*, and are *resolv'd* on her *Condemnation*. The many *Divisions* and *Subdivisions* of our *Sectaries* in *England* cannot be easily *reckon'd up*, they are so *numerous*; (for there are *hardly* more *Divisions* amongst the *Romanists* themselves.) Every *Sect* is desirous to have the new-modelling or *new-moulding* of our Church: and there is *not one* of them but has *as much* *pretense* for it, as *any other*; if not an equal *right*, yet an equal *want of right* to be our *Reformers*. They being equally *void of*, and as equally *Dissenters* from all Authority; abounding *All* equally in a *preference* of their *own* to *Superiour* Judgments; equal *Admirers* of *Themselves*, and as equally *contemptuous* of *other men*. There is not an *Anabaptist*, or *Quaker*, not an *Adamite*, or a *Bebemist*, no nor any other *Sectary* of whatsoever Denomination, but thinks it hard, and takes it ill, we are not All of Their Opinion, and do not conform to Their way of Worship. Now what a *Monster* would our Church be, if *every one* of these *Sects* had the *shaping* of her? and how much *worse* would our *Babel* be, than *That* which they call *The Whore of Babylon*? What then is to be *done*, or to be *said* in this case

case of our *present Breaches*? They that are *over* us in *Authority* must tell us what is to be *done*; But what is fittest to be *said* I suppose is This: That such of our Englishmen as own themselves *Protestants*, and yet *divide* from the *Church of England*, do contribute a great deal *more* towards the bringing in of *Popery*, than all the *Emissaries* of *Rome* could have done *without* them. And if ever we live to see the *Abomination of Desolation*, *standing* as heretofore in our *holy Places*, it will enter in at *That*, and at no other Door, than what our *Schisms* and *Separations* have open'd to it. Nothing but our *Divisions* can *bring in* Popery; and I had almost said too, that Nothing but our *Union* can *keep it out*. But *united* we cannot be, (whilst they that have *divided* from us are so strangely *subdivided* among themselves,) unless it be by *All Parties*, from every part of the *Circumference*, *concentring* themselves in *the Church of England*. And this the *proudest* of them may do, not onely *without a Blush*, but with the *greatest honour* and reputation to be imagin'd. For what (I pray) is the *Church of England*, but a most *Renowned* and *National* Church? A *National* Church the most *peaceably* and the most *regularly* reformed of *All the Churches*.

The chief *Reformed Church of Christendom*, which has *publickly* been *Establish'd* by *Law*, and *Canon*. The *onely Protestant Church* in *Europe*, which has been *able* as well as *willing* to *protect* other Churches in their Distresses. In a word, *The Church of England* has ever *conquer'd*, and *confuted*, and (if her *fugitive Children* do not unnaturally betray her,) will ever *keep* us all *safe* from *the Church of Rome*.

Gal. 5. 1.

§ 14. Take we heed in the *Third* place of such Deceivers, as would have it thought a *mark* of the *most reform'd*, to preach up an *Exemption* from *human Laws*, (such especially as relate to the externals of Religion,) and for a *Licentiousness of Life*, for *Christian Liberty*; ever *pressing* their Hearers to *stand fast* in it, that is, to be *obstinate* and *sturdy Rebels*. As if the *Liberty* of a *Christian*, wherein the *Galatians* were bid to *stand fast*, were not at all a *Manumission* from the *Bondage of Sin*, and from the *Empire of Satan*, and from the *Rigor* of the *Law* as 'twas given by *Moses*, But a *freedom* from *Christ*, and *Christianity* it self. Not onely from the *positive*, but from the *Moral Law* of *Moses*, which is as well the *Law of Nature*, and the *Law of Christ* too; and which, he tells us most expressely, He *came not to abrogate*, but on the

the contrary to *fulfill* ; and also *παρασκευάζει*, to *fill it up*. As if the *Liberty* of a *Christian* extended it self even to *Libertinism* it self; rendering every man *free* to judge the *Laws*, and *Legislators*, and (with a greater force of reason) the learned *Judges* of the Land: *free* to regulate the *Laws* by their *several Humours*, (which by the way is a thing *impossible*, and flatly implies a *Contradiction*,) rather than to regulate their *several Humours* by the *Laws*; which is not onely *possible*, but so absolutely *necessary*, that He who will not do this, (conform his private humour to publick Laws,) is fit to live in a *Desert*, in the Company of Creatures which have *no Law* at all; not in a *Kingdom*, or *Commonwealth*, not in a *City*, or a *Church*, where *Human Laws* (under God's) are the *Life* of *Liberty*, and *Propriety*, nor onely of *Livelihood*, but *Life* it self. Whosoever has been *protected* from any *injuries* of men by the *Laws* in force, must needs *confirm*, by his *Experience*, the *Truth* of what I now say: That such a Subject as will no longer *allow* the *Laws*, than the *Laws* allow him in his being *Lawless*, or no longer than they are *pleasing* and *usefull* to him, (as when they avenge him upon his *Enemies*, defend him in his *Liberty*, and assert him in his *Estate*,)



deserves not those Benefits of *Propriety* and *Safety* the Laws afford him. The Laws (I say) not onely *under* which, but *by* which he lives. 'Tis very plain, that such Laws *deserve* but *ill* from all *others*, if they do not deserve from *Him* an *uniformity* in his Obedience. Where human Laws *command* That which God does no where *forbid*, and *vice versâ*, where they *forbid* what God does no where *command*, Nothing is plainer in all the Scriptures, than that The *Ordinances* of *Men* are also the *Ordinances* of *God*: and to *submit* our selves to *Them*, not of *necessity*, but of *choise*, not so much *for fear of wrath*, as *for Conscience sake*, is no small part of our *Christian Liberty*, wherewith *Christ* has made us free. Gal. 5. 1.

Rom. 13. 1, 2.  
1 Pet. 2. 13.

§ 15. Take we heed in the *fourth* place of such Deceivers, as would beguile us into a *faith*, apt to make us *unfaithfull* in all our ways; a *faith* that *all things coming to pass* were antecedently *unavoidable*; and that by consequence when we have *sinn'd*, we have onely done *That*, which we could never have *prevented* the doing of: and this by the force of a most *absolute irrelative irreversibile Decree*, which did eternally so *determin* both the

End.



*End*, and the *Means*, as to necessitate our *Impieties* as well as *Punishments*. So that if we are *Elected*, all our *Vices* cannot hurt us; and if we are *not*, all our *Virtues* cannot avail us. So again, if we are *Reprobates*, we cannot repent although we would; and if we are *not*, we must repent, do what we can; and by consequence, as we were *born*, so we may *live* without care. Take we heed of being couzen'd by such false Logick, as may help us either *merrily* or *despairingly* to Hell, by making us *careless* of our *Actions*, and *neglectfull* of our *End*. By way of *Antidote* to the *Venom* lying hid in this Doctrin, we must so *think* of God, as becomes his *Godhead*. We must *think* nothing of *God*, which is dishonourable in *Men*. We must *believe* nothing of *Him*, which we would not be very willing to have believed of *our selves*. And we must so *speak* of God in the Ears of Men, as to beget in them a *love* and a *reverence* of him. And this we shall be sure to do, if we speak of his *Promises* and his *Threats* as we find them in Scripture to be *General*, and by consequence *Conditional*; of his *Soveraignty*, as *Just*; and of his *Mercy*, as extensive to *all his Works*; of his *Will*, as *Wisdom*; *sincere*, and *uniform*, not repug-

repugnant to it self, whether as *signi*, or *beneplaciti*, reveal'd, or *secret*; of his *Decrees* from all *Æternity*, in proportion to the *Rule* by which they are executed *in Time*; exclusive of his being a *Respecter of Persons*, and inclusive of his dealing with All *according to their Deeds*; of *Faith*, as *dead*, without *Works*; of *Repentance*, as *false*, without *Amendment*; of *Justification*, as *in Time*, not (as say the *Antinomians*) from all *Æternity*. For hence 'tis logically inferr'd by some of Eminence in the world, (who would not be thought to be *Antinomians*,) that their *Sins* were *forgiven* before *committed*; and that *Repentance* does not *precede*, but *follow* Pardon. A Doctrin as dangerous as any other that can be nam'd; and which does not *adorn*, but *disgrace* the Gospel, (as far as *Some* at least are thought to be *Preachers* of it,) which S. *Peter* on the contrary thought good to preach in *This Order*; *Repent, and be Converted, that your Sins may be blotted out*. Clearly intimating unto us, that a *blotting out of Sins* can never *follow*, unless *Repentance* and *Conversion* do go *before*. They that teach otherwise, are apt to beget a *Disbelief*, or (which is worse) an *ill Opinion* of the Almighty. Take we heed therefore that we be not deceived by such as These.

§ 16. Again take we heed of those *Idol-Shepherds*, (to use the phrase of the Prophet *Zechary*,) whose *left Eye* at least is sharp enough *sighted*, but onely their *right Eye is full of darkness*. They have human Learning enough, enough and too much of worldly Wisdom, but have no Divine light whereby to guide it. Such are they of whom I spake in the *later* part of my *Last Discourse*; who call their *Confidence* or *Caprice* by the name of *Conscience*, and teach the people under their charge, as 'twere to *regulate* their Lives by that *crooked Rule*. I do the rather speak twice of this grand Fallacy, because I take it to be *That*, of which we can never be told enough. For till men are catechiz'd in the point of *Conscience*, made to know its true *nature*, and the signification of its *Name*, (if I may speak mine own judgment with due submission to my *Superiours*,) they will not onely go *securely*, but even *greedily* to Destruction. Be their Sins never so *many*, and in weight never so *great*, yet if they can get themselves to *think* that they are *conscionably committed*, (as *Clement* did, and *Ravilliac*, and many more nearer Home,) they will reckon upon a *Saintship*, from nothing else but the *absence* of *lesser Sins* than they delight in, and doat upon. They will imagin *they have*

Zech. 11. 17.

made their Election sure, or rather that they have made themselves sure of their Election, (as they love to mistake the Text,) even by such a kind of partial and painted innocence, as (being seriously consider'd) is common to them with the Devil; who is not a Swearer, or a Drunkard, or a Committer of Adultery, and yet he is not the less a Devil. But such Professors not considering, that Spiritual Pride with her two Daughters, Sacrilege, and Rebellion, are Sins more antient than Hell itself, make no doubt but Those things will not onely accompany, but (as the Angels did Lazarus) will carry them up into Abraham's Bosom. If we consider by what Impieties some Bigots have expected to merit Bliss, and what others have understood by their following Providence, and Conscience, and by their being over-acted to do the Work of the Lord, (for so they cant it,) we cannot but say the greatest Mercy which can be shewn to such Criminals, is to make them less nocent (if not innocent) unavoidably. Which being not to be effected by congruous Grace, because it is not irresistible, should by consequence be effected by that which is; that if they will not choose the Glory, they may be mercifully compell'd to enjoy the benefit of their Obedience; and that how-

however they may perish by *other* Crimes, they may yet be *disenabl'd* to *damn* themselves by their *Rebellions*.

§ 17. Lastly, take we the greatest heed, of being led into The *Errour* that *'tis impossible for us to Erre*, whilst we believe as we are bid by the Church of *Rome*, which *deceives the most incurably*, by getting her Children to believe, she is divinely *undeceivable*. Take away This, and all her *other* Impositions will fall to ruin of Themselves. But by the *Help* of This *Errour*, *All the rest* must needs be swallow'd, how gross soever. To wit, That the 2 *Books of Maccabees* (and All the rest of the *Apocrypha*) are as much the Word of God, as the 5 *Books of Moses*, or any *other*: at least since the Canons of the *Council at Trent*, to whose *Authority* (forsooth) The Holy *Scriptures* owe *Theirs*. That in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, it is the Interest and the Duty of every *Christian* to be a *Canibal*; even *materially* and *grossly* to eat and drink the Flesh and Bloud of *The Man Christ Jesus*. That the *single Bishop of Rome* is the *Universal Pastor, Head, and Monarch*, over the whole *Catholick Church*, both *Diffusive*, and *Representative*, though in an absolute *Contradiction* to Four famous *Councils*, (which with the Papalins

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a See the two short Discourses of Mr. Dodwell, especially the First, and the excellent Preface to it.

b *Thesis propugnanda in Aula Collegii Clavomontani, die 17. Decembris A. D. 1661.* See the plea of Monsieur Talon Advocate General against This *Thesis*, in the New *Hæresie of Jesuitism*, p. 242, 243. and of the same Book, p. 3. & 4.

themselves do pass for *General*, ) to wit, of *Pisa, Constance, Basil, and Siena*. Not to insist on those other Councils, of *Chalcedon, Constantinople, Antioch, and Africa*. That there must be an *Infallible Judge of Controversies* on Earth, over and above the Word of God ; Though they who say it are not agreed, who the Judge of them should be : <sup>a</sup> whether the *Diffusive*, or *Representative*, or (That which They call ) the *Virtual Church Catholick*, or Their *Principium Unitatis*, (as they call the *Bishop of Rome*, ) who proudly *Lords it over them All*. That though nothing is to be added to The Apostles own Creed, consisting of but 12 Articles, ( Each Apostle casting in One, as *Ruffinus* tells us, ) yet the 12 more at least, thereto added by *Pius Quartus* and the *Council of Trent*, are to be sworn to, and Believed, as of equal Necessity to Life Æternal. To sum up all in a word, No Contradiction can be so gross, no Absurdity so great, as not to be readily entertained by Those Jesuited Bigots, who have beforehand devoured and swallow'd down without chewing That *Breeding Blasphemy and Falshood*, <sup>b</sup> *That the Pope is as Infallible as Jesus Christ, as often as he speaks ex Cathedrà, even without a General Council, not in Questions onely of Right, but in those*



those of *Faith* also. Let no man therefore deceive us with his pretended *Infallibility*, more than with his being *God*, or wholly *Impeccable* upon Earth. For He who cannot be deceived, can as little *Sin*; they are Attributes peculiar to *God alone*.

§ 18. But now 'tis time that I proceed to the second general Member of Sub-Division, by which a Caveat was enter'd against Deceits of all sorts, as well of the *best*, as the *worst* of Men. For

As heed is to be taken that no *evil* man deceive us by *good Appearances* and *Prætextes*; so there is use of as great heed, that no *good* man deceive us (against his will) by the *evil Example* of his *Miscarriage*. There being at least as much danger of the *one*, as of the *other*. If we allow our selves to \* think we may safely do, what some very *good People* have done before us, the consequence of it will be This, that we shall imitate the *worst* in the *best* of Men, and leave the *best* to be *Their peculiar*. And therefore here 'tis very fit for our observation, that 'twas not said by our Saviour (*Matth. 10. 17.*) *ῥεῦσθε ἀπὸ ἀνθρώπων*, beware of Men, that is of Some men, (Those of the *Consistories* or *Sanedrims* amongst the *Jews*, who yet are aimed at

\* Ab exemplo  
et simili tot  
sunt experi-  
menta fallaci-  
arum, quot  
hominum ca-  
pita: dum  
quilibet asse-  
qui vult  
quemlibet,  
dum exemplo  
dicit se vi-  
vere talium,  
quos approbat  
Ecclesia et  
canonizat,  
Ecce. Gerson  
Tract. 8. de  
custodi. An-  
gelorum par-  
titio 3. super  
Magnificat.



in especial manner,) But with an article prefixed, ~~προειρηται~~ ~~και~~ ~~της~~ ~~ανθεστηναι~~, beware of Men, that is, of all men *in general*, not excepting the very best. For let *Erasmus* and *Vatablus* say what they will, the prefixing of the article seems to import the whole species; as *Tostatus* and *Casaubon* at least do judge. Let us not say therefore with <sup>a</sup> *Bellarmin*, that so good a Woman as *Sarah* had never prompted her Husband to lie with *Hagar*, if she had not well known it to have been *lawfull*. Nor yet with a <sup>b</sup> greater man, that *Abram* might *dissemble* and *tell a lie to save his life*. Nor think the better of *Adultery* or *wilfull Murther*, for being committed even by *David* after a state of Regeneration. Nor look upon Incest itself as venial, because 'twas acted even by *Lot*, who in the holy Scripture is stiled *Righteous*. Nor imagin it does the rather consist with *Wisedom* to be *Idolatrous*, for that *Solomon Himself* did *worship Idols*, who is renowned for his *Wisedom* throughout the World. Nor be so illogical as to conclude in the behalf of *Polygamy*, because so honest a man as *Jacob* had *two Wives at once*, and is *no where reprov'd* in all the *Scripture*. Nor may we give an ear to Them who do *excuse* the worst *Impieties* of all such men as have been *Regenerate*, by im-

a Non credibile est Sarā feminā sanctissimā id facturū fuisse, nisi licitū esse scivisset. Bellarm. lib. de Matrimonio cap. 2.  
b Augustin. in Gen. Quæst. 26.  
c contra Faustū Manich. l. 23. c. 23.

putting them wholly to the *infirmity* of the *flesh*, and not as well to the *filthiness* of the *Spirit*. Some there are who are *serious* in the use of *such Logick*, (be it spoken to the disgrace of their wit and learning,) though it is patcht up of nothing but one gross Fallacy, *à benè divisis ad malè conjuncta*. Many things are very false in a compound sense, which being *divided* are very true; and many are *true* being *compounded*, which *in sensu diviso* are very false. David was *holy*, and committed wilfull Murther in conjunction with Adultery; But it was not committed by *holy David*. (for This would imply a Contradiction *in a seëto*.) He was *holy before*, and *holy after*, but in a state of *Unholiness* and *Condemnation* whilst he lay *snoring* in his *impieties* (as he did for some months) *without repentance*. So Solomon was *wise*, and a *Worshipper of Idols*; But he was not *Then wise*, when he stood guilty of Idol-Worship. Solomon and Peter were just as different, as *Peter* in the *Hall*, and *behind the Door*; or as the *Book of Kings*, and the *Book of Ecclesiastes*. When That impiety was committed, it was by *Solomon the Fool*, who recover'd not his *Wisdom* till he *repented*; that is to say, till he *amended*, and *chang'd his life*, till he became a *new Creature*,

ture, and brought forth fruits meet for Repentance.

2 Theff. 2. 3.

Zech. 13. 4.

Eph. 5. 6.

Matth. 7. 15.

2 Theff. 2. 2.

§ 19. And if heed is to be taken that *no good man deceive us*, we may not sure neglect Him who has *nothing of good but in bare appearance*. If the former may deceive us by the example of his *Sin*, well may the later deceive us too by the *lying sanctity* of his *life*. Then let not *any man* deceive us by *any means*. Neither by giving *smooth Speeches*, nor by wearing *rough Garments*; Neither by using *Foxes words*, nor by having *Sheeps Cloathing*; Neither by *Spirit*, nor by *Letter*. Not by the *current* of his *Prosperity*, not by the *readiness* of his *Praying*, not by the *commonness* of his *Preaching*, not by the plausible *Demureness* (called the *Godliness*) of his *Practice*. For the Devil were but a Dunce, in case he could not *fish* (whilst he is *angling* after Souls) with *more Baits* than *These*; and too contemptible a *Mimick*, if amongst *all* his cunning *Actions* he could not *personate a Saint*.

§ 20. But this is not All which does properly belong to a Christian's Caution. We must not onely take heed *that no man deceive us*, but as great heed is to be taken that *we our selves* *deceive no man*, and (more than That) that

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we undeceive others who are deceiv'd. We must contend for the Faith, and we must do it also with earnestness, (as S. Jude exhorts us all in the 4<sup>th</sup> verse of his Epistle,) not onely be in the right *our selves*, but labour to bring into the way of Truth all such as have erred and are deceiv'd. We must labour by our *Arguments*, as well as *Prayers*, to strengthen them that already stand, to comfort and help the weak-hearted, to *lift up the hands that hang down*, and the feeble *Knees*, to raise up such as we know are fallen, and by any means possible to Tread down Satan under all our feet.

§ 21. We see there is Danger on every side, both *within us*, and *without us*, both in *solitude*, and in *company*, whether our Company does consist either of *evil*, or *good* men, we had need have our Eyes and our Wits about us. We have need of it at *all* times, but *above all* in such as *These*, to which our Lord does here allude in the Text and Context which lies before us. And This would lead me, if I would follow, to the Third particular in the Division; to wit, *the Time*, or *Occasion*, wherein the use of this Care will be most in season. But This I confess is such a difficult and such a slippery kind of Doctrin, as of which I had rather make a very

*private use*, than run the publick risque of an *Application*. For in such an Auditory as This, (consisting of All that is Great and Prudent,) for Me to adventure to make a Search into Those particulars, out of which our publick dangers are most arising, were to discourse concerning *Tacticks* to such as *Hannibal* and *Scipio*; or to *Demetrius the Poliorketick* concerning the *Taking of a Town*. And therefore leaving to *men of Counsel* their proper Business, which is to sit at the Helm of Church and State, and wisely to provide for the Good of Both; I keep my self within the Modesty which is expected from a *Divine*. Abruptly concluding my present Sermon, just as *S. Peter* his first Epistle, with a *ἡμετέρι, γεννησθε*, Be sober, be vigilant; because your Adversary the Devil as a roaring Lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour; whom resist stedfast in the Faith. And the God of all Grace who hath called us to his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

1 Pet. 5. 8, 9,  
10, 11.

( 161 )

O F

F E A R

As Necessary to

F A I T H,

IN THE

Well-ordering of our LIVES.

I COR. 10. 12.

*Wherefore let him who thinketh that he stands, take heed lest he fall.*

§ 1. **A** Caveat evermore in season, and of necessity to be *press'd*, and that upon every sort of Persons of all Conditions and Degrees, and this in what *sense* soever we please to take it.

It has its value even in *That* wherein the Apostle never meant it, and which (to say Truth) was much below his Consideration, to

X 2

wit,



wit, as apply'd to any secular or *worldly Station*. For had we the leisure to make reflection upon all Times and Places, as far as Historians have brought them to us, we should find the observation to be as general, as it is wholsom, That the greatest Things and Persons, (the greatest Monarchies with their Monarchs, the greatest States-men as well as States,) have *Then* been *nearest* to a *Downfall*, when they have been in all appearance the *most establish'd*. How many are there in the world in whom *Extremities* have *concenter'd*? And as the two Globes of Heaven and Earth do mutually touch in a single Point, so there is nothing more frequent, than for Conditions of as great Distance as the Nadir and the Zenith to meet in one and the same Man. *Nebuchadnezzar* the most exalted, and the most abject in all *Assyria*. *Apries* the best provided, and the most destitute thing in *Ægypt*. *Polycrates* the fortunatest and the unfortunatest man of *Samos*: *Deified* one day, and *crucified* the next. *Polydorus* the most lov'd, and the most hated of *Lacedæmonians*. *Periander* the very wisest, and most besotted of the *Corinthians*. *Sejanus* the most admir'd, and most contemptible man in *Rome*. *Dionysius* the fiercest Tyrant, and tameest Pædogogue



in Greece. Therefore the *Apophthegm* of Solon was not so witty, as it was true, That *no man's happiness can be certain before his Death*. And 'twas for this reason onely, that *Cleobis and Biton* were præferr'd before *Cræsus* in point of Bliss, that *They were dead, and died well*; whereas *He*, with his Prosperities, was yet *but living*; And neither knew *how* he should *End*, nor what *Evenements* might *befall* him 'twixt *This* and *That*. My Text had therefore been very pertinent and of moment, had it exhorted to nothing better, than *human* Prudence; or provided for nothing more than an *outward* Safety.

Diog. Laert.  
l. 1.

§ 2. But as nothing can profit a man to purpose, which cannot *profit him at all in the day of Wrath*, so no Prudence can be sufficient, but That by which a man *stands in the Evil day*. Not in the day of *Temptation* onely, But in the *hour of Death*, and the *Day of Judgment*. Nor can we pronounce of our *Condition*, as it is *spiritual* and *æternal*, but by *beginning* our Accompt from our *later End*. Which because without Prophecy we cannot do, (as *Jeremy* did by *Zedekiah*,) therefore *happy is the man that feareth always*, as *Salomon* by his experience was taught himself to teach others. *Prosperity*

Prov. 11. 4.

Eph. 6. 13.

Prov. 28. 14.

2 Pet. 3. 17.

1 Cor. 9. 27.

is one thing, and *Happiness* quite another. We may be sure, whilst we *live*, that we are more or less *prosperous*; But whether more or less *happy*, we must *live and die too* to assure our selves. *Death* alone is That *Point*, in which the Terrestrial and Cœlestial Globes *meet*, if they meet at all. And *as the Tree falleth*, just *so it lyeth*. *S. Paul* himself, whilst yet a *Passenger*, and not *within sight* of his *Journy's End*, (whilst he was yet but in the *Valley*, far enough from having ascended unto the Top of Mount *Nebo*, from whence he might have seen his Crown of righteousness,) was so afraid to loose his *Station*, and to *fall from his own steadfastness*, (which *S. Peter* provides against too) that he did *beat down his Body*, and carefully *bring it into subjection*, and all for this momentous, though modest reason, *lest whilst he preached unto others, He himself might become a Castaway*. And being as carefull of *other Mens*, as of his *own* æternal Interest, he did as tenderly admonish them as he had done his own Soul. Giving this Caveat to *all* in general, though written in special to his *Corinthians*, *Let him who thinketh that he stands, take heed lest he fall*.

§ 3. In which words we have Three things obser-

observable. First, a *tacit Disuasive* from carnal Confidence and Security. Next an explicit Exhortation to Christian Prudence. Lastly, the Reason of Both at once from a great Danger on the one side, and in consequence of That, from as great a Necessity on the other. The Danger is not so *trivial*, as That of falling with holy Job, from an high Pitch of *Wealth* to the Depth of *Poverty*; or with the brave Aristomenes, from a Pinnacle of *Glory* into the Gulph of *Lacedæmon*; Nor is the Danger no more affrighting, than That of falling with Jeremy into Jonathan's Dungeon, or with Daniel into the Den of the hungry Lions. But here the Danger is of falling from *Light* to *Darkness*; from an high pitch of *Grace*, the Favour of God, into a Bottomless *Assbaltites of Fire* unquenchable. Some there were who did not think there could be any such Danger, to them that stood as They did (or as they thought they did at least) in a state of Grace. Such were the *Gnosicks* alluded to in several verses before my Text. But 'tis below S. Paul's Reason, and inconsistent with his Sincerity, to write of Danger where there is *None*; or to forewarn us of a Mischief which cannot possibly come to pass. In bidding us look unto our footing, he takes

takes it for granted that we are liable to a *Fall*. And accordingly 'tis the sense of our common Mother the Church of *England*, (in the 16<sup>th</sup> of her 39 Articles,) *That after we have received the Holy Ghost, we may depart from Grace given, and fall into Sin, though by the Grace of God too we may rise again.* Now the greater our *Danger* is by carnal confidence and *security*, the greater *need* we stand in of a *Christian Prudence*. And This, though but *One*, is such a *Cardinal* vertue, that 'tis really a *Guardian to all the rest*. Especially as consisting of those three parts, *Providence*, *Caution*, and *Circumspection*, without which it is impossible (as nicely distinguish'd by the \* *School-men*) for *Christian Prudence* to be complete. For first of all we must have *Providence*, to cast about for such *means* as are conducing unto our *End*. Next we must have *Circumspection*, whereby to attend to every *Circumstance* wherewith the *Means* are to be *cloath'd*. Last of all we must have *Caution*, for the *avoiding* of those *Impediments*, which may otherwise *hinder* our Course of vertue, and unhappily interrupt us in bringing the *Means* unto the *End*.

§ 4. Now to These three parts of a *Christian Prudence*, there are three sorts of men who are  
here

\* Aquin.  
22. q. 48. c.  
¶ 22. q. 49.  
art. 6, 7, 8.

here exhorted ; either directly in the Text, or in its relation to the Context.

First, consider we the Text in its meer literal importance, ὁ δοκῶν ἐστᾶναι, *Let him who seems to himself to stand*, and that as fixt as an *Antinomian*, even by *Grace irresistible* ; by having been *justified from Æternity* ; by having had all his *Sins forgiven*, so long before they were committed ; or by being *not able to Sin at all* ; so as in His imagination he cannot possibly depart from the *Living God* ; ( which yet the *Epistle to the Hebrews* does bid him take heed of ; ) who seems to himself to stand so firmly, as that he cannot fall a little, much less totally ; much less finally from Grace ; Let Him, ( I say ) as well as others, take heed lest he fall.

Heb. 3. 12.

Next, consider we the Text as it looks back upon the Context, ( from the first Verse unto the eleventh, ) and thereby acquaints us with its more rational importance. *Let him*, ( who does not only seem to himself to stand, but ) who stands in good earnest by ghostly strength ; by having had his feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel ; by having been cleansed from his Sins in the Blood of Christ, and in the Baptism of Tears, which arise from the Spring of sincere Repentance ; Let him not think it a thing be-

Eph. 6. 15.

low him, to take great heed, that he do not fall. For the *Israelites* from the first to the tenth verse of this Chapter, were all in Covenant with God; did all partake of those priviledges which he vouchsafed them as his Children; were all baptized unto Moses in the Cloud, and in the Sea; did all enjoy the same Miracles; were fed with Manna sent down from Heaven; refresh'd with Water out of Horeb, gushing forth from a dry and a barren Rock; They mystically tasted of *Christ Himself*, (v. 4.) But yet as firmly as they stood, we find their feet slipt. For first they stagger'd in the Faith; Then they stumbl'd into Idolatry; Next they fell in the Wilderness, (all excepting two persons,) and were destroy'd of the Destroyer, (v. 5. and 10.) All which things (saith our Apostle) happen'd to them for Ensamples, and are written for our instruction on whom the ends of the world are come, (v. 11.) From whence He rationally draws This signal Corollary and Caveat, (for we see 'tis Both at once, and is accordingly brought in with the Causal Wherefore,) Let him who thinketh that he stands take heed lest he fall.

Yet one step farther. Let him who stands faster than other men who do truly stand, almost as fast in reality, as the *Gnosticks* in the Con-

text



text did in their proud *Imagination*; as fast as *David* and *S. Peter* in their high pitch of *Grace*; as fast as *Adam* in That of *Innocence*; or as the bright *Morning Stars* in That of *Glory*; Let him (I say) as well as others, yea let him *above* others take heed lest he fall. The reason is, because *His Fall*, if he falls, must needs be the *greater* and less excusable, the *higher* and *firmer* his *Station* is, and the *greater* his *Ability* to stand his *Ground*. The Angels that fell from *as high as Heaven*, and that *without a Tempter* too, even for this very reason (as I observed once before) could not fall less than *as low as Hell*; and so *Their Fall* was *without Recovery*. For when *God was in Christ reconciling the World unto himself*, he did not take upon him the *Nature of Angels*, whereby to give the fallen Regiment a Capability of rising, (however *Origen* and his Disciples would have given it had they been able,) and that for the reason I just now hinted. Whereas the lapsed Man *Adam*, newly taken out of the *Earth*, and whose Foundation was in the *Dust*, had both the *Subtilty* of a *Tempter*, and the *Strength* of a *Temptation*, and (together with his *Innocence*) a *Frailty* of *Nature*; all which did excuse him at least à *Tanto*; whereby he became the properer



object of God's *Compassion* as well as Justice, and so the more fit for a *Restoration*. From whence I humbly conceive I may infer with good Logick, that by how much the *firmer* our *footing* is, by so much the *greater*, and not the lesser, our heed ought to be *that we do not fall*.

I have hitherto shew'd the *Meaning* and the *Cohærence* of the Text, and how 'tis necessary for all, of all Conditions and Degrees, by whichsoever of its handles men please to hold it. And I have laid out the several matters to be meditated upon in its Prosecution.

§ 5. But being seriously desirous to speak as *usefully* as I can, and that within the Time allow'd, I am to take and give notice of three sorts of *Libertines* in these our days, who either have *wilfully transcrib'd*, or else have *stumbl'd accidentally* upon some of the worst of Hæresies in the Primitive Times; and are as dangerous to *others*, as destructive to *Themselves*. Some are of opinion, that if Vessels of Election, they *\*cannot Sin do what they can*. They are placed in such a state of *Impeccability*, that on a supposal of their *willingness*, they are *not able* to do amiss. And This expressly was the Hæresie of The infamous *Manichæus*, as *S. Jerome* tells *Ctesiphon*; adding also that *Priscilian* was a Bird

\* Manichæus electos suos, quos inter animas Platonis in cœlestibus collocat, dicere emori carere peccato, nec si velint, peccare posse. Hieron. ad Ctesiph. ad. versus Pelag. Tom. 2. p. 252.

Bird of that Feather. Others are of opinion, that though they *can* commit Sin, God *cannot* see it in his *Elect*. And This expressly was the Hæresie of *Marcus*, who taught the poor and rich Women whom he *debauch'd* and made *His*, that they might fearlessly and freely be as voluptuous as they pleas'd, \*because by virtue of their Redemption they were ἀνεσθητοὶ καὶ ἀόρατοι, at once inapprehensible and invisible to the Judge. Just as *Homer* feign'd *Pallas* to have cover'd her self with *Pluto's* Helmet, that so she might not be seen by *Mars*. (A Privilege as senseless, as That which was allow'd to the Ring of Gyges.) There is a *Thir.* sort of *Thinkers*, who say that God can see Sin, but cannot punish it in his *Elect*, or impute it to them; and that they are so sure-footed, that though they slip never so grossly, or stumble never so often, yet for all That they can never fall, not only not finally, but but not so much as for a Time. And This expressly was the Hæresie of *Jovinian*, (which *S. Jerome* in a whole Book has very effectually confuted,) that They who once have been regenerate in the Laver of Baptism, cannot be tempted by the Devil, so as to cease being regenerate. We have the *Sum* of all *Three* (and the *Sequel* too) in the one *Valentinian Hæresie*, which

\* Διὶ δὲ  
ἀνεσθητοὶ  
καὶ ἀόρατοι  
γίνεσθαι τὴν  
ἐκείνην. *Epi-*  
*phan. Hæ-*  
*res. 34. ex*  
*Iren. l. 1. c. 8.*  
*et 9. p. 72.*  
*Hom. Iliad. 5.*

*Hieronymus*  
*adversus Jo-*  
*vinianum*  
*l. 2. Tom. 2.*  
*p. 69. &c.*

was one of the *first*, and the *worst* of all; as the holy Father and Martyr *Irenaeus* shews it at large. What the *Malignity* of it is, and to how deep a degree of Wickedness 'tis apt at least in its nature to betray them that own it, They *Themselves* have best told us by *This Similitude*,

\* That as a *Maß* of pure Gold in the foulest Dirt does not lose so much as its beauty, much less its nature, but still retains the whole goodness and worth of Gold; so let the Saints, that is *Themselves*, lie and wallow whilst they will in the *Mire* of Sins, and in those Sins especially whereof the Scripture saith plainly, that they who do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God, yet they cannot thereby lose their spirituality and perfection. They cannot cease from being Branches of That true Vine, into which they were once ingrafted.

§ 6. Now that other mens *Dangers* may be employ'd to keep us *safe*, and that other mens real *Miseries* may be improv'd to our being *Happy*, we must convince our selves thoroughly of the Truth of this Doctrin, which in my Text is most clearly and unavoidably imply'd; To wit, that He who now *stands* in a Christian State, of *Repentance*, and *Conversion*, and a blotting out of Sins, (which is *Justification*,) may possibly fall

\* "Οὐ γὰρ  
σφόδρα ἔν βλα-  
βερῶ κατὰ  
την φύσιν  
ἀποβλέπει  
καὶ ἐν τῇ  
αὐτῇ, ἀλλὰ  
τὴν ἰδίαν φύσιν  
διαφυλάττει,  
τῇ βλαβερῶ  
μὴδὲν ἀδ-  
κῆσαι δυνα-  
μὴν τὴν ἑ-  
σθὲν ἔχει, &c.  
Iren. l. 1.  
p. 26.

Gal. 5. 21.  
1 Cor. 6. 9, 10.

fall into a *dangerous* yea and a *damnable* Condition, unless he takes such strict *heed*, as our blessed Apostle does here injoyn. And here I cannot but be sorry, that so *clear* a *Text* as *This* should stand in need of any *Sermon* to give it *Evidence*. That our *Apostle's Exhortation* should be so little *argumentative* in some mens minds, that we must light up our *Candles* to shew his *Sun*. I much admire that those *Liber-tines*, who think they stand in no need of this holy *Caveat*, are not sufficiently convinc'd by their own *Experience*, that since their having been *regenerate* in the *Sacrament* of *Baptism*, which is (no less than *Circumcision*) a *\*Seal of the righteousness of Faith*, they have fallen into *deadly* and *wasting* Sins. Lord! how many *Sons and Daughters* of our one *Common Mother*, the *Church of England*, have *renounced* the very *Baptism*, by which alone they were *Christianiz'd*, have abandon'd the *House of Prayer*, and in it the *Lord's Table*, and on it the *outward Sign of invisible Grace*? have *fallen away* before our faces into the scandalous commissions of *Schism* and *Hæresie*? have turn'd *apostates* from the *Faith* which was once *deliver'd* unto the *Saints*? have indulgently marched on in the ways of *Corah*, in the Sins of *Sacrilege*, and *Rebellion*,

\* Rom. 4. 11.

Jude 8.

Rom. 13. 1, 2.

Psal. 106. 37.

Isa. 1. 21, 22,  
23. which  
compare  
with Hof. 4.  
1, 2, 6.Jerem. 2. 13,  
13.

17.

bellion, and still are snoring in the Impieties of being *heady, high-minded, Despisers of Dominion,* and *Evil speakers of Dignities,* ever *Opposers of Authority ordain'd by God,* which is to be a worse Thing than a *Common Drunkard?*

§ 7. How many Examples are there in Scripture of *final Apostasie* from Grace, or from a *State of Regeneration,* enough to dit the widest Mouth of the *daring'st Gnostick?* How many of God's *peculiar people under the Law,* did fall away from their acknowledgment of the onely true God, into the *worst* of all Sins, which is *Idolatry,* and into the *worst* of all Idolatries, which is *the worshipping of Devils,* and into the *worst* of that *worst* too, not by offering their *Sheep and Oxen,* but their own *Sons,* and their own *Daughters* unto Devils? *How did the faithfull City become an Harlot?* how did her *Silver* become arrant *Dross?* She was once full of *Judgment;* *Righteousness* lodged in her, but not *Murtherers.* Be astonished, O ye Heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, (as God himself spake by the Prophet *Jeremy,*) for my People have committed two evils, forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and bewn them out Cisterns, broken Cisterns which hold no water. Hast thou not procured this unto thy self, in that thou hast forsaken

forsoke the Lord thy God? I had planted thee a noble Vine, wholly a right seed; How then art thou turned into the degenerate Plant of a strange Vine unto me? Nor is it onely under the Legal, but under the Gospel Dispensation, that many begin to build well on a good foundation, but do not finish. Many \*end in the flesh, who began in the Spirit; and Many are <sup>a</sup>called, but few are chosen. Many are sanctified, but few are sav'd. Many are justified for a time, but very few in comparison do persevere unto the End. That saying of our Saviour Matth. 24. 12, 13. [The love of many shall wax cold, but he that endureth unto the end shall be saved,] S. Paul reflecting on, has explained Thus: That some in the later times shall depart from the Faith, giving heed to seducing Spirits, and doctrines of Devils: speaking lyes in hypocrisie, having their Conscience seared with an hot iron. There the word in the Original is very observable: They shall depart (saith the English,) ἀποστήσονται (saith the Greek,) They shall apostatize from the Faith of Christ. A very evident opposition unto final perseverance, in Both those Places; and 'tis as evident that the Apostasie there prophesied of, is from a State of Sanctification. For the Love waxing cold, and the

21.

Luk. 14. 30.

\* Gal. 3. 3.

<sup>a</sup> Matth. 20. 16.

Matth. 24. 12, 13.

1 Tim. 4. 1.



1 Tim. I. 19,  
20.

Joh. 15. 6.

Rom. 11. 17,  
20.

*Faith departed from*, (*That* expressed by our Saviour, and *This* by our Apostle,) are the same in both Texts, in which they *ought* to have *persever'd*. So again in the *first* Chapter of the same Epistle to *Timothy*, S. Paul exhorts him to *hold fast faith*, and a good Conscience, which some (says He) *having put away, concerning Faith have made shipwrack*. That *This* was *justifying Faith* which was thus *put away*, and *suffer'd shipwrack*, may appear by two reasons clearly arising out of the Text: First, because it was *That*, to the *holding fast* of which S. Paul does there exhort *Timothy*; next, because it was *That*, which was attended with a good Conscience. If a man (saith our Saviour) *abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a Branch, and is withered, and cast into the Fire*: clearly spoken of a *Reprobate* who had formerly been in *Christ*, but *abideth not in him*, and was therefore *cast forth as a wither'd branch*. A Text to which our Apostle in probability does allude, where he tells us of certain *Branches broken off*, from The *Olive Tree*, though once *partakers of the Root and Fatness of it*; and *broken off* they were for their *unbelief*. From whence he exhorts his *Believing Romans* to beware, lest they who now *stand by Faith*, do also fall into infidelity; and



and *They* be also broken off, who are grafted in. There are that *hear* the word of God, and receive it with Joy, and *indure* for a while in that good Course, and yet in time of Persecution they are offended and fall away, saith our blessed Lord. Some have erred from the Faith through the Love of money, saith S. Paul to his Son Timothy; and in the Eighteenth of S. Matthew, the Servant forgiven, v. 32. was yet condemn'd, v. 35. The same is signified by the Parable of an unclean Spirit cast out by Repentance, or regeneration, and re-entring by a Relapse into the House of a man's Heart well swept and garnish'd, and that with 7 Devils, worse (if possible) than himself, so as the Person he repossesseth is worse than ever. Which very Parable of our Saviour S. Peter seems to point at in the plainest terms; whilst he tells us of some, so intangled and overcome by those pollutions of the world which before they had escap'd, as that their later end was very much worse then their beginning. Again 'tis said by the same Apostle, in the Chapter going before, that He who lacketh those things by which he is to make his Election sure, has forgotten that he was purged from his old Sins, that is to say, that he was regenerate.

§ 8. Whosoever is not satisfied with what I  
Z 2 have

Matth. 13.  
20, 21.

1 Tim. 6. 10.

Matth. 12.  
44.

2 Pet. 2. 20,  
21, 22.

2 Pet. 1. 9.

Matth. 12.  
31, 32.

Heb. 6. 4, 5.

have hitherto alledg'd out of holy writ, let him tell me what he thinks of That unpardonable Sin, *The Sin against the Holy Ghost*. Let him say whether that Sin can ever be possibly committed, unless by one who was once *enlightned*, and had *tasted of the heavenly Gift*, *had been made a partaker of the Holy Ghost*, and of the good word of God, and the powers of the World to come. Let him weigh the *fourth Verse*, and compare it with the *Sixth* of the *Sixth Chapter* to the *Hebrews*, and Both together with the *Comment* of learned *Calvin* thereupon, if he will not trust *That* of our most learned *Dr. Hammond*. Let him consider if 'tis not possible for such a man to *fall away* who is *so enlightned*; and if 'tis not impossible for such a man *falling away* from such a *Station* and *State of Grace*, to be *renew'd again unto repentance*. But above all let him consider the *πάλιν ἀναγεννίζων* in the sixth verse of That Chapter, which signifies expressly a *second* regeneration, and every *second* implies a *first*. The Apostle does not say barely, *it is impossible to renew them* (if such as they fall away,) but that 'tis impossible to renew them *again*; clearly intimating unto us these two Illations: First, that a man may so fall from a *State of Grace*, as not to be able to rise

rise again; Next, that the *Grace* he falls from was such as gave him a *Salvability*; or such as by which he was in a State of *Regeneration*.

§ 9. Being about to carry my proof from *Universals* to *Individuals*, I shall not instance in *Saul*, with *S. Cyprian* and *S. Austin*; much less in *Abab*, with *S. Jerom* and *S. Chrysostom*; much less yet in *Cain* and *Esau*; nor yet in *Alexander*, and *Demas*, *Philetus*, and *Hymenæus*, *Phygellus* and *Hermogenes*, who were *Deserters of Christ* in his *Apostles*, *Wasters of Conscience*, and *Shipwrackers of Faith*; I shall not instance in *Dorotheus* who fell away to serve Idols at *Thessalonica*; nor yet in *Nicolaus*, who, though one of the *seven Deacons*, was yet the Author of that old *Heresie* which carries the Name of The *Nicolaitans*; much less shall I instance in the most excellent of the *Heresiarchs*, *Nestorius*, *Photinus*, *Apollinaris*, and *Pelagius*; (for these last may be the subjects of great Dispute; and whatsoever may be true in the *Judgment of Faith*, yet the *Judgment of Charity* forbids me to affirm that These did finally fall away:) But of *Judas* I suppose there is no Dispute. For He was chosen by *Christ* as one of the *Twelve select Apostles*, *Joh. 6. 70.* and is said to have been given by God the Father to God The Son,

2 Tim. 2. 17.

2 Tim. 4. 10.

2 Tim. 1. 15.

whose word he kept for some time, *Joh. 17. 6.* and was justified by Faith, v. 8. prayed for by Christ, not as one of the World, but as His peculiar, v. 9. He confess'd and taught Christ, and did Miracles in his Name, *Matth. 10. 5, 7, 8.* He was one of Christ's Sheep, v. 16. had been grafted into Christ, *Joh. 15. 2.* notwithstanding all which, he did not onely fall from, but betray his Master, hang'd himself as a man Lost, and is call'd by our Lord expressly, *ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπολλείας, The Son of Perdition.*

§ 10. I would not here be so mistaken, as if I meant that God's *Elect* can fall away finally from Grace. I am so very far from That, that I affirm it to be impossible, and to imply a Contradiction. For They and They onely are God's *Elect*, who do finally persevere in a Christian Course; who being delivered out of the hands of their Enemies, do not onely serve God in holiness and righteousness, (for so do many that are called, and are not chosen,) but they serve him in Both together All the days of their Lives; as Zachary goes on in his *Benedictus*. We must therefore so distinguish in our Discourse of this subject between The Regenerate and The Elect, as still to carry in our minds as well their Difference as their Agreement. In This they agree,

that

that all *The Eleēt* are still *Regenerate*; In *This* they differ, that all *the Regenerate* are not *Eleēt*. The former *may* and *do* often, the later *cannot* fall finally from Grace. Concerning the former, and *Them alone*, all the Scriptures I have urged and argued from must be understood. For the later are onely They, who do *\*indure unto the End*. Onely They that *overcome*, and so are said *to have a right to the Tree of life*. The *Eleēt* are onely They, that *can finally never fall*; for if they could, they could not have been elected to life eternal.

And yet even of *These* I am to say in the second place, that they fall *totally*, and for a *Time*, many of them, and of the *Best* too. Not onely *Solomon*, and *Aaron*, and *David himself* in the *Old Testament*, but *all the Apostles* in the *New*, and *S. Peter above them all*, are uncontrollable Examples of This sad Truth; if *Idolatry*, and *Adultery*, and *wilfull Murther*, if *Lying*, and *Cursing*, and *wilfull Perjury*, and a repeated *abjuration of Jesus Christ*, are Sins inconsistent with *saving Grace*, and the *inhabitation of God the Holy Ghost*. 'Tis true indeed that *The Eleēt* who *fall away* for a time into *Deadly Sins*, and so by consequence, whilst *impenitent*, into a *State of Damnation*, cannot possibly

\* Matth. 24.  
13.

Rev. 21. 7. &  
22. 14.

2 Pet. 1. 10.

possibly *die* 'till they have *repented*; because *they have This Seal upon them, The Lord knoweth them that are His.* But This which is offer'd as an Answer to what I say, is an irrefragable *Argument* to evince the *Truth* of it. For if *David* (for example) could not *die* till he *repented*, it is for this reason onely, that he could not be *sav'd without Repentance*; and that before he *repented*, he was in a *State of Condemnation*. Saving Grace and Impenitence cannot *simul & semel* be in one and the same Man. 'Tis the *Condition* of the great and precious *promises* in the Gospel, and in effect the whole *Covenant* 'twixt God and Man, that *all* shall be saved *with repentance*, and *None without it.* Hear ye me, *Asa*, and all *Judah*, and *Benjamin*, (said *The Spirit of God by Azariah*,) *The Lord is with you, whilst ye be with Him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.* So again by *The Prophet Ezekiel*, *When the righteous turneth from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall even die thereby: and if the wicked walk in the Statutes of life, he shall surely live.* *Promises and Threats* are both alike *conditional*, not onely under the *Law*, but as expressly under the *Gospel*. It is the saying of *Christ himself*, *Who-*  
soever

2 Chron. 15.  
1, 2.

Ezek. 33. 18.

ver. 15.



soever shall confess me before men, Him shall the Son of man also confess before the Angels of God. But he that denieth me before men, shall be denied before the Angels of God. 'Tis S. Paul's to the Christians who were at Rome in his days, that God will render to every man according to his works. To them who seek for Glory by continuance in well-doing, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the Truth, Indignation and Wrath. And again, If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortifie the deeds of the body ye shall live. And yet more plainly to our purpose, in his Epistle to the Colossians, You who were Enemies in your minds by wicked works hath he reconcil'd, if ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel which ye have heard. And in like manner to the Corinthians, Ye are saved by the Gospel, if ye hold fast or keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believ'd in vain. The Epistle to the Hebrews is very full to this purpose, We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our Confidence stedfast unto the end. Whose House we are, if we hold fast the Confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the End. Now the just

Luk. 12. 8, 9.

Rom. 2. 6,  
7, &c.

Ch. 3. v. 13.

Col. 1. 21, 23.

1 Cor. 15.  
1, 2.

Heb. 3. 6, 14.

Heb. 10. 38,  
& 39.

shall live by Faith. But if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. Plainly intimating in *This*, what is taken for granted in the very next verse, that from the same kind of Faith by which it is said the Just shall live, there were some in the best of Times who drew back unto Perdition. Heb. 10. 39.

§ 11. What now is the Advantage we are to make of all This? and what the Lesson, which all these Scriptures are apt to teach us? Truly the lesson is plainly This: That if the End of our Prayers, if the End of our Hopes, the End of all our Endeavours is but Conditional, and All the Promises of the Gospel are made unto us with an [If we do so and so,] we must not now boast of our being Christians, as the Hebrews once did of their being Israelites. We must not glory in our being the younger Brethren or Members of Jesus Christ, as They in their being the Seed of Abraham. We must not pride it in the Church, as They did commonly in the Temple. Nor insult over the Jews, as They did foolishly over the Gentiles. For if God spared not Them who were the natural Branches, We must also take heed, lest he also spare not us. If They were broken off for their unbelief, and we by Faith are grafted in, the proper use we are to make

Rom. 11. 18,

19,

20,

make of the observation, is that *we boast not against the Branches; that we be not high-minded, but rather fear; for we bear not the Root, but the Root us.* We must consider both *the Goodness, and Severity of God,* and the *Grounds of Both: on them that fell, Severity; but towards us, Goodness;* with an *If we continue in his Goodness.* Otherwise we shall be broken off too; and *they shall be grafted in again, if they do not still abide in their unbelief.* We cannot reasonably desire a clearer State of this matter, than in That whole Passage of the *Eleventh Chapter* to the *Romans.* And therefore seeing it is imply'd by our blessed Lord, that *even The Salt of the Earth may lose its Savour,* and become good for nothing, but to be utterly cast out, and trodden under foot; that a *Branch of the true Vine* may lose its Verdure, and become good for nothing, but to be cast into the *Fire;* I thought it good (as *S. Peter* \* speaks) to put you in mind of these things, although ye know them already, and are established in the Truth. And still I think it good (with the same *S. Peter*) to press the giving all diligence for the making of our calling and election sure. I think it good (with *S. Peter*) to say, *Beware, lest ye also being led away with the Error of the Wicked, fall from your own*

21,

22,

23.

*Matth. 5. 13.*

*Joh. 15. 5, 6.*

\* *2 Pet. 1. 12, 13, 15. & Ch. 3. v. 1, 2.*

*2 Pet. 1. 10.*

*Ch. 3. v. 17.*

stedfastness. If God was so provoked by the Children of Israel, (to whom the Conditional Promise was made) that he swore in his Wrath, they should not enter into his Rest, because they fail'd of the Condition on which the promise was made; Then I may sure without Præsumption draw the very same Use from That tremendous matter of Fact, which the Inspired Writer makes in the very next Verse, *Take heed, Brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily whilst it is call'd, To Day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of Sin.* And again, *Let us fear* (saith the same Apostle) *lest a Promise being left us of entering into his Rest, any of you should seem to come short of it, or ὑστερνέσθαι, to come behind it.* I may sure without arrogance exhort the Best of my Hearers, much more my self, and all other Christians of my low Class, that They and We receive not the Grace of God in vain. That They and We do look diligently, lest any man fail of the Grace of God; or lest any fall from it, as it is in the Margin, and is sufficiently imported by ἐσθλὴν ἢ χαλεπὴν τὴν

§ 12. The Sum and Upshot of all is This:  
There

There is in many a *Seed of Grace*, which does never bring forth the fruit of *Glory*. For as *The Spirit of Truth* makes none *Infallible* upon Earth, so *The Spirit of Holiness* makes none *impeccable*, none incapable of falling into any *Deadly Sin*, or a *Sin unto Death*. The reason is, because the *workings* of *The Spirit* are onely *congruous*, and *sufficient* upon voluntary Agents, never *compulsive*, and *irresistible*. From whence it follows that *The Degrees of Grace and Truth* in several persons, are not at all from God's *Omnipotence* as it is *such*, or from his *over-ruling Providence* as *over-ruling*, (for *Then* there could not be possibly such a *variety of Degrees*; All persons *Then* must have been *equally good*, and onely good in perfection;) But partly from the *different Dispositions*, and *Behaviours*, and *Negotiations* of the Subjects with the *Talents of Grace* committed to them, (which *some* are for *\*employing*, and *some* for wrapping in a *\*Napkin*, as our Lord in his Parable was pleas'd to make it plain to us,) and partly from the *Measures of The Spirit's Communication*: which to *some*, is much *more*; to *others*, *less*; to *none*, *irresistible*; to *all*, *sufficient*. How very many there are that *fall* from that *Faith and Patience*, which in *Job* were two *Rocks*, which nothing

Mar. 4. 3,  
1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 10  
verse 21.

\*Luk. 19. 16,  
20.

\* Col. 2. 7.

42 Theff. 1. 3.

Judg. 18. 7,  
27.

was strong enough to *shake*, much less to *shatter*,  
 (and yet the Grace of God in *Him* was never co-  
*gent*;) but being well \* *rooted*, and very well  
*cultivated* besides, by daily exercises of Piety,  
 and all good Works, <sup>a</sup> *grew up exceedingly* in  
 his Soul, and did *not wither*; I say, how many  
 there are that *fall* from their several Graces, that  
*idly waste*, and *misspend*, or wilfull *squander a-*  
*way* their Talents, I have hazarded your pa-  
 tience in making it plainer than there was need;  
 by which excess if I have err'd, I am the rather  
 to be forgiven, because it has proceeded from  
 the sincerity of my Desire, to beget in such as  
*stand*, a *taking great heed that they do not fall*.  
 And that our Adversary The Devil may never  
 find *Us*, as the *Messengers* of the *Danites* found  
 Them of *Laiſh*, dwelling *careless*, and *secure*,  
 after the manner of the *Zidonians*, and *void of*  
*Business*; Let it be our *prime Business*, from this  
 day forewards and for ever, not onely to watch  
 and pray lest we enter into Temptation, but to  
 reflect on the chief *Ends*, and the chief *Objects*  
 of the Caution commended to us. The chiefest  
*Ends* of it are the *Glory of God*, and our *own Sal-*  
*vation*. Its chiefest *Objects* are the *Evils of Sin*  
 and *Punishment*; the *Work itself*, and the *Wages*  
 of it. But in calling these *The Chief*, I do imply  
 there



there are *many more*. Even as many as there are *Dangers* wherewith we are every day beset; and whereof in this Text we are advised to take heed.

§ 13. We have but *one way to stand*, But to fall, a *Thousand*. Fall we may by our *Enemies*, which (*without and within us*) are not easily to be numbred. Those *within us*, in our *Bosom*, are still the *worst*, because the *nearest*, and least *suspected*; and *then* most *hurtfull*, when most *Belov'd*. The worst *without us* are our *Advancements* to Wealth and Honour, because they are apter than any other, first to *lift up our heads*, then to *trip up our beeles*, and to *throw us down*. Many *stand*, when at the lowest, stout and *stedfast in the Faith*, (as *S. Peter* speaks,) who being *drunk with Prosperity*, do quickly *stagger*. And then how easily do they fall, Even at every little *thrust of Applause*, or *Plenty*? Yea we may fall, without a Thrust, by the bare *Treachery* of the *Ground* upon which we stand. Some Parts of it being too *slippery*, and some too *high*, and very dangerous are the *blocks* which are laid in *others*. Now 'tis plain the more *slippery* the *places* are we stand in, by so much the *apter* we are to fall. And 'tis as evident, that the *higher* our *Stations* are, by so much

much the *greater* our *fall* will be. But what the *stumbling-blocks* are which are laid in our way by some false Teachers, (besides those few already mention'd) and at which if we *stumble*, 'twill be *impossible not to fall*, deserves a larger Examination than can be made at this *Time*, and perhaps a *more Polemical* than can belong to *this Place*. In the mean time 'tis certain, that in proportion to the *dangers* there are of *falling*, the general *Caveat* of my Text does extend it self. *Take we heed* lest we *fall* for want of any of those things, which are conducive to our *Station* and *state* of *Grace*. Either for want of that *Knowledge* of things *Essential* to Religion, which is *requir'd*; or for want of that *Zeal* which is *according unto Knowledge*; or for want of that *Consideration* we ought to have, of what we know well enough does concern us neerly; or for want of that *Distrust* in our selves and others, to which the wise *Epicarmus* does well excite us. *Take we heed* we do *not fall* for want of carrying still about us a *fear of falling*. A fear both of our Natural, and of our adventitious Frailty. A fear of Him who alone holds us *up*, and when he will can throw us *down*. A fear of God, as he is *just*, but above all, as he is *mercifull*. *Because there is mercy with thee, O Lord,*

Lord, therefore (saith David) shalt thou be feared. For the abusing of his mercy does more than any other baseness, incense his Justice. A Fear of falling from his grace, and by consequence out of his favour, and by consequence into his wrath and his sore displeasure.

Psal. 130. 4.

§ 14. Amidst our several ways of falling, we have but one to stand firm, however diversly expressed in holy Writ. I mean the congruous Assistance of God's free Grace, and our own working together with it. All the use S. Peter makes of his Apostasie from Christ for a little time, is to put in a Caveat for Himself and Us too, not to fall from our own stedfastness; and the effectual way to That, is to grow in Grace, as he there exhorts us; Not to content our selves with this, that we are not any thing worse than we use to be, but to be constantly advancing from strength to strength, and to be carefull that our last days may be our best too. All the use S. Paul makes of the Doctrine he had taught of a Resurrection, is to be stedfast, and unmoveable; and the effectual way to that, is always to abound in the work of the Lord. So again we may infer from his Epistle to the Ephesians, The onely way for us Impotent and Sil'y men, to be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil, is to

2 Pet. 3. 17,  
18.

1 Cor. 15. 58.

Eph. 6. 11.

put upon our selves the whole Armour of God. To be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Implying a full Trust in God, and as full a Distrustfulness of our selves. A putting our selves out of our own, into his Protection. Which yet we cannot till convinced of this great truth, that in our selves, as of our selves there dwelleth no good thing. No not so much as Inclination to any thing that is Good. No not so much as Aversion from any thing that is Evil. That our Destruction [if it happens] is of our selves; But all our sufficiency of him alone, who stiles himself by way of Eminence, *the All-sufficient*. And hereunto we are to add this most pertinent supplication, (which must be *servent* and *without ceasing*;) that he will be pleas'd to work in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure, that so (having him for our \*Coadjutor in the language of our Apostle) *we may work out our Salvation with fear and trembling*. And that at the final consummation of all our days, he may crown his own Gifts and Graces in us. Which God of his Mercy dispose us for, for the Glory of his Name, and for the worthiness of his Son.

To whom with the Father, in the unity of the Spirit, be Glory and Thanksgiving for ever and ever. *Amen*.

O F

Phil. 3. 13.

\* Συμμετρεῖ-  
τες.

2 Cor. 6. 1.

(193)

O F  
P E A C E  
A N D  
H O L I N E S S  
U N I T E D,

As æqually required to Our  
S A L V A T I O N.

HEB. 12. 14.

*Follow Peace with all Men, and Ho'i-  
ness, without which no Man shall see  
the Lord.*

§ 1. **A**S there are but *two Ends* at which  
our Studies are to be levell'd, (let  
our Parts and our Learning be what they will,)  
to wit, a *Rectitude* in our *Knowledge*, and an  
Bb 2 *Exactness*

2 Cor. 5. 19.

Heb. 11. 5.

Jam. 1. 27.

*Exactness* in our Religion ; ( the first of which is still *subservient* and has a *Tendency* to the second ; ) so there are but Two things in which *This Second* does chiefly stand ; to wit, a Rectitude of *Faith*, and the Truth of *Prædication*. The *Former* does consist in the Belief of two Things too, to wit, *That God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself*, And, *as such, is the Rewarder of Them that diligently seek him*. The *Later* lies chiefly in two Things more ; Our *helping the fatherless in their Affliction*, and the *keeping of ourselves unspotted from the World*. Nor can we doubt whether in *These* consists the substance of our Religion, because besides that out of *These* our *several Duties* may be deduc'd by the light of *Reason*, we have *Authority* also of *Scripture* ( to wit, *S. Paul* and *S. James* ) to assure us of it. Then why should we *compass Sea and Land* to meet with Catechists, and Preachers, and Commentators, and School-Divines, a world of Fathers, and of Councils, and Ecclesiastical Historians, and an hundred other Instruments for the completing of a *Christian*, ( however necessary they are for the accomplishment of a *Divine* ) whilst *Christianity* in it self is a thing so *easy*, and may easily be held in so *little Room* ? Had it been suffer'd





§ 2. Now considering how much 'tis easier to have an Excellence in the *Knowledge*, than in the *Exercise* or *Practice* of Christianity, And that without our *Indeavours* of *living up* to such *Knowledge*, All our *learning* will but *light us* into the Territories of *Darkness*; Little or Nothing will be got by our most plausible Attainments, besides the Meagre Satisfaction of going *learnedly* to *Hell*, and *the Privilege* to be *beaten with many stripes*, whilst the more *ignorant* Transgressor must be contented with a *few*; I cannot think of a fitter Text for the giving advantage to my Design of setting up the most *Usefull* and *Real* learning, in the place of *That learning* wherewith *the Devil* is oft *adorn'd*, (to use the words of *S. Jerome* touching the Excellence of *Pelagius*,) than this important *Exhortative* of our learned Author to the *Hebrews*; recommending to them the *Study* of *Peace* and *Holiness*, as That on which there dependeth (as it is *followed*, or *despis'd*,) an unspeakable *Proportion* of *Bliss*, or *Misery*. These are the *Sciences*, and the *Arts*, which will make us *wise unto Salvation*. We are to *ballance* all our *Knowledge* with these *two Weights*, whereby to preserve it from *puffing up*. These are to take up our *Meditations*; on These our *Souls* are to be

be *fixt*. These are the *Beauties* we are to *court*, with the greatest *Love*. These the *Riches* we are to *covet*, with greatest *Avarice*. These the *Dignities* to be sought for, not onely with the greatest, but best *Ambition*. And therefore every thing else being laid aside, (at least with a *comparative*, though not an *absolute* Neglect,) we are to give ourselves wholly to the Study of These Two; *Following Peace with all men, and Holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.*

§ 3. Though the Text at first Hearing may seem as *easy* as it is *short*, yet there is hardly any thing in it, which stands not in need of an *Explication*; And The *English Translation* is so much harder than the *Original*, as that we cannot reach the *One*, without recourse unto the *other*. *Follow Peace*, saith the *English*. *Pursue it earnestly*, saith the *Greek*. It is not every kind of *Following* will serve the Turn; for 'tis not ἐπιδε, *sequimini*, but διώκετε, *persequimini*, and we know, The word διώκειν has a remarkable Importance, implying *Industry*, and *Eagerness*, in seeking That that we desire. Εἰδὼς διώκετε, *hunt after Peace*. Διώκετε ἀγίαν, *run apace after Holiness*. As if the *Apostle* should have said, that *Peace and Holiness* are things to be *contended for and Courted*, with great *Ambition*. We must

must not *follow* them *so*, as to come *behind* them; but rather *so* as to *overtake* them. So as the *Racer* follows the *Prize*; or *so* as the *Hound* follows the *Hare*; or *so* as the man of *Contention* does greedily *follow* a suit in *Law*; or *so* as *S. Paul* does elsewhere urge us to *follow after Charity*. For each of these is Imported by the emphatical word *διώκετε*, implying *zeal* in our Christian Duties, and *Perseverance unto the End*.

§ 4. After the *Nature* of the *Act*, consider the *latitude* of the *Object*. Which though express'd by a *Contraction* into these two Branches, *Peace*, and *Holiness*; yet like a Couple of great *Arms*, they do *imbrace* the whole *Decalogue*, by the large extent of their signification. For by *Peace* is meant *Charity*, in which all *Justice* is folded up; And thence is said by *S. Paul* to be *the fulfilling of the Law*, (taken There in an *extended*, as Here it is in a *stinted* sense,) because according to the Rule amongst moral Philosophers, [*ἐν τῇ Δικαιοσύνῃ συνάλλεσθαι πᾶς ἀρετὴ ἐστίν*,] *Justice* is a *Παναρτερον*, (as the Eastern Fathers do call the Book of *Ecclesiasticus*;) a comprehensive kind of *Pandeet* of all manner of Duties. For as *S. John*, in his first Epistle, has reduced all *Vices* to these three Heads,

Heads, *The Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eye, and the Pride of Life*; so S. Paul, speaking to *Titus*, compriseth all *Vertues* in this Trichotomy, *Living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World*. Now to live righteously what is it, but to do justice unto our Neighbours? What, to live soberly, but to be just unto our selves? (not to abuse our own Persons by any Intemperance or Debauch?) And what, to live Godly, but to deal justly with God himself? (not to rob him of the service, nor to defraud him of the honour that's due unto him?) The first is included in the word *Peace*, (taken here as it is in a stinted sense,) the second and the third in the word *Purification*. I say, *Purification*, because 'tis literally the English of the Word *ἀγνῶσις*, which in our English Translation is render'd *Holiness*.

§ 5. And this deserves to be the Subject of a *third Consideration*. For it is not *εἰσώμιω καὶ ἀγνῶσιω*, *Peace and Purity*, which notes the Habit of being Clean; But 'tis *εἰσώμιω καὶ ἀγνῶσιν*, *Peace and Purification*, which notes the continued Act of *cleansing*. Betwixt which two, there is not onely a very great, but an *usefull* Difference. For hence we learn that whilst we live, we must evermore be on the *mending* hand.

1 Joh. 3. 3.

Must never look upon our selves as *good enough to serve turn*. But as a Pot of boyling water is ever casting up a Foam, until it is *purged* of all its *Filth*; so we must daily be *casting out* somewhat or other which is *amiss*; ever *busie* in the work of our *Reformation*; ever *mending*, and *purging*, and *purifying* our selves. Seeing 'tis said by S. John, that *he who hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as God is pure*. We must not content our selves (for *shame*) with a *stunted Piety*, with the Reproach of being *Dwarfs* in the School of Christ; But *grow* in Grace (as the Apostle speaks:) Nor must we ever *leave growing*, until we come to a *perfect man*. And thus to Peace we are to *add* Purification. For they are not *joyn'd* with a *Disjunctive*, (it is not follow Peace or Holiness) as if the *one* were sufficient without the *other*; But These *Unitedly* are the things, which must be *prosecuted*, and *follow'd*, with *Zeal*, and *Fervour*.

§ 6. And then in the fourth place, there is great *Reason* for it. Because if either of these is wanting, *ἐὰν τις οὕτως, ὁ κύριος οὐκ ἔσται ἐν αὐτῷ*, *No man living shall see the Lord*. Let his *Parts*, or *Acquisitions*, be what they can be; Let his *Principles*, or his *Party*, let his *Person*, or *Profession*, be what they



they will; Let him be born of *Godly Parents*, let him be carefully brought up within the *Bosom of the Church*, let him be *Papist*, or *Puritan*, or in the *middle* of each Extreme, A sober *Protestant*; let his pretensions be what they will to *Regeneration*, or *Election*; yet unless he follows *Peace*, and *Peace* with *All Men*, and *Purification* as well as *Peace*, and unless he follows Both with *Faith* and *Patience* unto the *End*, He is a *Man of impurer Eyes*, then can ever be admitted to see the *Lord*.

§ 8. Thus We see what is meant by *peace* and *holiness*, and as well for what *reason*, as after what *sort* we must follow both. There are *three other Things* which will deserve an Explication, but That will best of all be made by way of *Answer to three Objections*. For a *Conquering Truth* is much *more glorious*, than a *Truth un-examin'd*, or *unattempted* with *opposition*.

§ 9. First it may easily be doubted, whether 'tis *Possible*, or *Safe*, to have *Peace* with *All men*. For *some* are such *Enemies unto Peace*, that when we speak to them thereof, they make them ready to *Battle*; and *Peace* with *such* does seem *impossible*. And *Impossibilium nulla est obligatio*. It cannot be *necessary* to do, what is *Impossible* to be done. Others are always at *war* with *God* by

Rom. 1. 30.

their Impieties, they are κακῶν ἐφευγταί, *Inventors of evil Things*; nay δειστροφεῖς, *Haters of God*; and Peace with *such* does seem *unsafe*. For may we be at Peace with *them*, who will not be at Peace with *God*? These are They that in Scripture are call'd *The World*. And know ye not (saith S. James) *that the Friendship of the world is Enmity with God*? These are they that in Scripture are call'd *the Wicked*. And there is no Peace saith my God to the wicked. (Isa. 57. 21.) Which though spoken in *another*, may yet be apply'd in *this* sense also. When men

\* 2 Jch. 11.

are scandalously wicked, \* an Apostle forbids us to eat or drink with them; or to receive them into our houses; or to bid them God-speed. And as this was the Precept of that Apostle, so according unto this he fram'd his Practice. For with the Heretick *Cerintus* he would not be in the same Bath. The Heathen Poet *Horace* was thus affected in his *Vetabo sub iisdem sit trabibus, Fragilemque mecum solvat phaselum*. So said *Moses* to the *Royalists* touching the *Rebels* which then arose against *Him* and *Aaron*; *Depart from the Tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs*. Besides that as much as in us lies, we ought to be affected like *God himself*; and so by a necessary consequence we are to *bate* those that

that *bate* Him, because they are *such* as are *bated* by Him. (For so the word *δεσμεύει* does very naturally import, although it is not observ'd in our English Bibles.) And therefore by *this* the Prophet *David* seeks to *prove* his *Affection* to God Almighty; *Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate Thee? yea I hate them right fore.* Or (as the New Translation hath it) *yea I hate them with a perfect hatred.* Why then saith our Apostle, *Follow Peace even with All men,* not excepting the *Worst* of all?

§ 10. We see the Objection is very specious. But strike one Text against another, (as a flint against steel,) and there will leap from both together both *Fire* and *Light* too. The Answer to it is to be taken from *Rom. 12. 18.* and thence forwards unto the end. *If it is possible, as much as in you lies, live peaceably with all men.* He does not peremptorily say, *live peaceably with all men at all adventure, let the Case be what it will.* But *εἰ δυνατόν, if it is possible,* and *ὡς ὅσον, as much as in you lies.* Whereby 'tis evidently imply'd, that in diverse hard cases *it is Impossible,* it does *not lie in our power* to be at Peace with all the world. All that God requires of us, is to imploy our poor *utmost* in order to it. Whilst we hate the *Malefactor*, we must

have charity for the *Man*; so as to *pity* his being *sick* of habitual *Sin*, and *supplicate* God for his *Amendment*. Follow Peace we must with *Them*, who *fly* as fast as we can *follow* it. And to the end we may attain it, we must *endeavour* at least to *win* them by all good means. Such as is the *not avenging our selves*, but *giving place unto wrath*; *feeding our Enemies when they are hungry*, and when they are *thirsty* giving them *Drink*. For *by so doing*, we *shall heap* (saith the Apostle) *Coals of Fire upon their Heads*. Not that this can be spoken of any *mischievous* kind of charity; For it is meant of nothing else but the *Fire of Love*. And *Love* is fitly compar'd to *Fire*, because it has both a *purging* and *melting* Faculty in its Nature. The *Metaphor* is taken from the custom of the *Founder*, who when he cannot *melt* his *Metal* by putting Coals of Fire *under* it, does heap some Fire *upon* it too. So we must heap the *Fire of Love* upon our Enemies Heads, not to *consume* them in their *Impenitence*, but to *melt* them into *Repentance* and *change of Life*. At once to *purifie* the *Dross*, and to *mollifie* the *hardness*, with which their hearts are affected towards us. But if at last our *Malaeicks* are us'd in vain, we must *then* indeed proceed to the *severer* Methods

thods of *Charity*, which is *Charity never the less* for being attended with *severity*. A *Rod* being ordain'd for the *Back of Fools*, who will not be wrought upon at all by the *Spirit of Meekness*. (1 Cor. 4. ult.) When men are the *worse* for being *pardon'd*, and even *corrupt* themselves with Goodness, we must not be so *over-cruel*, as to *punish* them with *Impunity*. For God in great *Mercy* hath given us *Magistrates*, to be his *Ministers of wrath*, and his *Executers of vengeance*. Nor are they liable unto *any* more noxious failing, than that of *bearing the Sword in vain*. Hereon is founded both the *Lawfulness*, and the *Necessity* also of *War* upon some Occasions, as being That without which *Peace* itself cannot be kept. The Law of *Nature*, and of *Nations*, That of *Moses*, and of *Christ*, and the best mens *Examples* permit it to us. As it were easie to evince, were This a *Time* or *Place* for it. And what I say of the *Civil*, is just as true of the *Spiritual Sword*. The highest Act of Christian charity that can be shown to the obdurate, is to *deliver them up to Satan for the Destruction of the Flesh*; because it is to this wholesom end, That *their Spirits may be sav'd in the Day of the Lord Jesus*. (1 Cor. 5. 5.) Thus we see what is meant by *Peace with All men*;

men ; how far forth it is *extended*, and how it admits of a *Limitation*.

§ 11. Another Objection may be rais'd from the Pronoun [*Which*] because it is in the Greek, not *ὅν*, but *ἃ*, and so may seem to relate rather to *Holiness*, than to *Peace*. As if our Duty towards *God* were a great Requisite to Salvation, but *not* our Duty towards our *Neighbour*. Whereas in Truth the very *discharge* of our Duty towards our *Neighbour*, is one of the great and main Duties we owe to *God*. Peace and Holiness are such *Twin-Sisters*, as are not like the *Tindarida*, or *Twins of Leda*, who (after the manner of two Buckets, whereof the one is going up, and the other down,) did *take their Turns* in Heaven, and Hell ; But like the *Twins of Hippocrates*, or the two Friends in *Valerius*, who neither could *live*, nor *die* asunder. He that *follows* not *Peace*, does *fly* from *Holiness* ; or *follows* it onely to *drive* it from him. Why then saith our Apostle, not *χωρὶς ὧν*, without which *Things*, nor *χωρὶς ἧς*, without which *Peace*, but *χωρὶς ἃ*, without which *Holiness*, no man living shall see the Lord ?

§ 12. The Answer is, that the word *ἃ*, is of an *equivocal* signification ; as being equally of the *Masculine*, and *Neuter Gender*. But  
some



some there are in the world of eminent Learning and Reputation, who taking it up by the *wrong handle*, have unhappily fastened upon a wrong signification, and so have set up *Holiness* to the *prejudice* of *Peace*. Meerly for want of consideration, That the Relative [*Which*] in this place is the *Neuter Gender*, and hath not any *single word* for its Antecedent, but the *whole Clause* going before. It is not in a *divided* sense,  $\chi\omega\epsilon\iota\varsigma \ \& \ \acute{\alpha}\gamma\iota\sigma\mu\acute{o}\varsigma$ , without which *Holiness*, but in *sensu composito*,  $\chi\omega\epsilon\iota\varsigma \ \& \ \delta\iota\acute{\alpha}\kappa\epsilon\upsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma \ \& \ \epsilon\iota\varsigma\ \tau\omega\ \kappa\alpha\iota \ \acute{\alpha}\gamma\iota\sigma\mu\acute{o}\varsigma$ , without which *Following* of *Peace* and *Holiness* united. Whereby we are given to understand, That there cannot be such a Thing as a *Godly Rebel*, or *Holy Boutifew*, because the *Subject* excludes the *Adjunct*. To say that such or such a Man is a most *conscionable Schismatick*, or a *religious exciter* unto *Sedition*, (whilst he *fights away* his *Conscience* to win its *Liberty*, and sacrifices *Peaces* to pretended *Holiness*,) is to affirm *both Parts* of a *Contradiction*. He that is of an *unpeaceable*, must needs be of an *unholy Spirit*. For as *Peace* without *Holiness* is but *Adherence unto a Faction*; so *Holiness* without *Peace* is but *Hypocrisie*. They that are so *superstitious* as to *strain at Gnats*, (such as the Authorized Rites of *Cross* and *Surplis*,)

Dd

whilst

whilst they are also so *prophane* as to *swallow Camels*, (such as are the crying Sins of *Schism*, and *Sacrilege*,) cannot well be call'd *Followers*, but onely *Persecuters* of Peace, (and *that* indeed is *one Sense* of the word *Δις*.) Nor can we say they are *Possessors*, but onely *Personators* of Holiness. I am not willing to be so *rigid*, and do heartily wish it were *false* to say, That they are really nothing else but the *Apes* of *Satan*; who is *Then* at his *worst* the *Prince* of *Darkness*, when he transforms himself the most into an *Angel of Light*. So said our *Saviour*, and so *S. Paul*. And from *both* we may infer, That of *all* the *Hypocrites* in the world, the *Devil* himself is the most *Demure*; and by being such indeed, is the *more* a *Devil*. Thus we see what is meant by the Relative [*Which*] in this Place, and what *use* we are to make of its *Antecedent*.

Object. 3.

§ 13. But what may last of all be meant by *seeing the Lord* in this Text, that our Apostle should set it down as the greatest *Recompence of Reward*, to such as are *Followers of Peace and Holiness*? When *Moses* desired to *see the Lord*, and therefore earnestly *pray'd* that God would *shew him his Glory*; The very *Mercy* of God's *Answer* did consist in the *Reason* of his *Denial*.

Exod. 33. 18.

Thou

*Thou canst not see my Face; for there is no man shall see me and live. And therefore Gideon himself, although a mighty man of Valour, (as God himself is pleas'd to call him) a man as stout as the steel with which his Proverbial Sword was temper'd, was yet exceedingly afraid, as soon as he perceiv'd he had seen an Angel of the Lord. And so it was with good reason that Manoab said unto his Wife, We shall surely Die, because we have seen God. And if these things are so, that we cannot see God, without the danger of sudden Death; It may seem a sad thing for a man to be a Follower of Peace and Holiness, because by that means he shall see the Lord. But*

*Jer. 20.*

*Judg. 6. 22.*

*Judg. 13. 22.*

§ 14. The Answer to this is extremely obvious. It being no more than to distinguish betwixt the Eyes of our *vile*, and of our *glorified* Bodies. If we behold him with the *first*, we shall find him indeed a *consuming Fire*. But when we shall see him with the *second*, we shall find him nothing less than a *quickening Light*. Here our Eyes are so carnal, that it very much hurts us to see the *Sun*, unless we see him in his *Reflexion*, or at least through the *veil* of some *Diaphanous Body*. And if the *Brightness* of the *Sun* is enough to strike the Beholder *Blind*;

*Answer.*

How can we safely gaze on *Him*, to whom the *Sun* is but a *Shadow*? Yet after *the Time* of *Restitution*, when what is *sown* in *weakness* shall be *raised* again in *power*; Then our *Life* will consist in the *sight* of God. We *then* shall see him *as he is*, no longer *darkly* as in a *Glass*, but *face to face*; and that with infinite *Pleasure*, as well as *Ease*. And this alone is that *Vision*, which is alluded to in the Text. Without an earnest Prosecution of *Peace* and *Holiness* in conjunction, no one shall be qualified to *live* by *seeing*, what here he cannot *see and live*. None shall enter *within the Veil*, or be made a partaker of the *Beatifick Vision*. None shall wait on his *Throne* in *whose presence is Life*, and where there are *Pleasures for evermore*.

§ 15. Thus in the Suit of the *Explication*, we have (before we are aware) a full *Division* of the Text. And not so only, but also practical Reflections on all its parts.

First, We have seen a *single Act* of great Moment. And Secondly, How 'tis fixt on a *double Object*. The double Object is *Peace* and *Holiness*, which, according to the Scope of the word *dicare*, (shewing the *Energie*, and the *Force* of the *single Act*,) are to be Prosecuted and follow'd with *Zeal* and *Fervour*.

Next

Next to the *Act*, and the *Object*, which are sufficiently express'd, we have their *absolute Necessity* very significantly *imply'd*. For *these* are set as the *Condition*, on which alone we arrive at *Bliss*. It is for *none* to *see God*, but *the pure in heart*. And therefore *this* is a cogent *Reason*, for the *fastening* of the *Act* on the *Double Object*. For the *Intensivenes* of the *one*, and the *Extensivenes* of the *other*.

Matth. 5. 8.

§ 16. But now because it is impossible, that men should *eagerly pursue* their Christian Duties, whilst they believe them to be *needless*, or *gainless* Things; Things which *rob* them of their happiness in this *present World*, and *without* which they may be happy in *That to come*: We must possess our selves more fully than we have hitherto done, not onely with the *Nature* of Peace and Holiness, but more especially (and in the first place) with their *absolute Necessity to life æternal*; whereof unless we thoroughly convince our selves, we cannot hope (with any reason) to ingage our Resolutions to *follow Both*.

§ 17. First, For the word *Peace*, it is that that comprehends our whole Duty towards our *Neighbour*, and as well to our *Enemies*, as to our *Friends*. For how can we follow *Peace*

with *All men* in so earnest a manner as the word *δικη* does import, unless we labour, by forgiveness, to overcome evil with good, (*Rom. 12. ult.*) much more must we render unto every man his Due, Tribute to whom Tribute, Custom to whom Custom, Honour to whom Honour, Fear to whom Fear, (*Rom. 13. 7.*) and so by analogy of Proportion, Service to vvhom Service, Love to vvhom Love, no injury to vvhom no injury is due. (For every Injury is breach of Peace.) We must owe no man any thing, but to love one another, *Rom. 13. 8.* And therefore injure him vve must not, no not so much as in desire. This is to follow Peace indeed, when we do not onely not give a Cause, but not so much as an occasion of just offence. When we keep not onely our Hands, but even our Heads and our Hearts from picking and stealing. When we do not commit Adultery, no not so much as with our Eyes. When we do no Murther, no not so much as in our wishes. When we dishonour not our Parents (whether private or publick, Ecclesiastical, or Civil,) not not so much as in our Wills. This is, as much as in us lies, to make an eager Prosecution of Peace with all men. Which comprehends our whole Obedience to the Second Table of the Law.



§ 18. Secondly, As *Peace* does grasp the whole Duty of Man to Man, so we may say also of *Holiness*, that 'tis the whole immediate Duty of Man to God. Which more especially consisteth in these three Things: In preserving our *Loyalty*, in exhibiting our *Reverence*, and lastly, in rendring our *Active Service*. The first, hath respect unto our *Thoughts*, the second, unto our *Words*, the third, unto our *Actions*. First, for *Loyalty*, That (we know) is a virtue, by which a Servant does acknowledge no Master but his own, holds no *Intelligence* with his *Enemies*, admits no *Rival* in his *Affections*, but ever honours him, and owns him, and adheres to him alone against all Pretenders. And This is that which is commanded in the two first Precepts of the Decalogue. *Thou shalt have no God but me. Thou shalt not make any graven Images, to bow down to them, or worship them.* This is holiness in *Thought*. Which however 'tis *Necessary*, is not enough; And therefore to this we must add our *Reverence*. That we know to be a virtue which is equally compounded of *Love* and *Fear*, and by which an *Inferiour* does speak with *Awe*, concerning any one above him whom he does honour or admire. And this is that which is commanded in the

Vid. Catech.  
Card. Richl.

the third Precept of the Decalogue. *Thou shalt not lift up the name of thy God in vain.* Thou shalt not onely *not* use it *falsly*, but *not* so much as upon *trivial* and *slight Occasions*. This is holiness in *Word*. Which, however it is *Necessary*, is not enough neither. And therefore to this there must be added our *active Service*. *That* ( we know ) is an *execution* of what our Master gives us in *charge*. And ( as an acknowledgment of *Supremacy*, as well as of *Maintenance*, and *Protection*, ) a *setting aside* our *own* business, that we may *wholly attend* upon our *Master's*. And this is that which is commanded in the fourth Precept of the Decalogue, *Remember that you keep holy the Sabbath Day*. Six days are allowed thee to do thine *own* business; but the seventh is set apart, in the seventh thou shalt do *no manner of Work*. No manner of work which is thine *own*, but *all manner of work* which is thy Master's: Not onely *acts* of *Sacrifice*, ( such as our Duties in the Church, ) but *works* of *Justice*, and *Mercy* too. For these indeed are the things, in which especially consisteth the *Sanctification* of a *Sabbath*, and are call'd by our Saviour *the weightier matters of the Law*. This is *holiness in action*. And so we see the *three things*, where-  
in

in our *holinefs* is to confift; which comprehends our whole obedience to the *first Table* of the *Law*.

§ 19. I have the rather been thus *plain* in chewing the *Latitude* and the *Nature* of these *Grand Duties*, that the *exa€tnefs* of our *Knowledge* may be our *Directory* to *Practice*. It being *necefsary* to know what it is *necefsary* to practice, Holinefs towards God, and Peace with all men. For whilst we are told by our Apostle, that *without these two*, there will be no seeing of God, we are as good as assur'd by God himfelf, that *These* precisely are the *Terms* on which Salvation is to be had. Infomuch that if either of these is wanting, there's no *escaping* the *Pains* of *Hell*, nor any *attaining* the *Joys* of *Heaven*. And therefore after their *Nature*, I am to fpeak of their *Necefsity*, their *absolute Necefsity* to *Life eternal*.

§ 20. And first, Observe how *other* Scriptures do hold conformity with *This*. Without these two, we cannot poffibly make our *Calling* and *Election* *sure*. Not the first, For *we have boldnefs* to enter into the *Holieft* by the *Blood* of *Jesus*, that *we may draw near* with a *pure Heart*, *having* our *Hearts sprinkled* from an *evil Conscience*. (*Heb. 10. 19. 22.*) Nor yet the second,

E e

For

For God hath chosen us in his Son, that we should be Holy, and without Blame. (Eph. 1.4.) Without these two, our Justification vwill be in vain. For God did therefore Reconcile us when we were Enemies in our Minds by wicked works, that he might present us Holy, and Unblameable, and Unreproveable in his sight. (Colos. 1.22.) Without these two, vve lose the End, and so do frustrate the Work of our Redemption. For our Lord Jesus Christ gave himself for the Church, that he might present it unto himself a Glorious Church, that it should be Holy, and without Blemish. (Eph. 5.25.27.) Without these two, vve lose the Benefit of the Rod, and do partake of That as Bastards, which is intended to us as Sons. For as vve are told by the Apostle, that if we are without chastisement, then are we Bastards, and not Sons; so he presently adds, that God correcteth us for our profit, to make us Partakers of his Holiness. (Heb. 12.10.) In a vword, Without an earnest prosecution of Peace and Holiness United, (for I have shewed that the one cannot subsist vvithout the other,) vve lose the Benefit of Grace, and so evacuate the Means of our Glorification. For we all with open face, behold as in a Glass, the Glory of the Lord, that we may be changed into the same Image, from  
Glory

Glory to Glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.  
(2 Cor. 3. 18.)

§ 21. Nor have we onely store of *Scripture*, but *Reason* for it. For if Salvation were to be had by *appearing Righteous unto men*, The greatest *Hypocrites* would become the most glorious *Saints*. If by the stoutness of a *Belief*, or by a *Hope without doubting*, None would be happier than the *presumptuous*, and such as are *carnally secure*. If by the *Latitude* of a *Knowledge*, or by the *Reſtitution* of *Opinions*, it would be better sure with none than the *Lapsed Angels*; who are as *Knowing*, and as *Orthodox*, as any meer man can be thought to be. Heaven would Then be a kind of *Jayl*, full of the guiltiest *Malefactors*. The *Error* of the *Origenists* would presently pass into a *Truth*, and the worst of *Devils* receive the Benefit of a *Redemption*. But no man's reason will yield to *That*. For whosoever does but believe there is a *Heaven* and a *Hell*, must grant that the *one* is for the *Recompence* of the *Good*, and the *other* for the *Punishment* of *Evil Doers*. Which shews the *absolute Necessity* of *Peace* and *Holiness*; being as 'twere the *two Eyes*, without which it is impossible to see the Lord.

§ 22. But here withall we are to take an especial Care, that we do not divide the con-  
sideration

deration of their *Nature* from the consideration of their *Necessity*; but still consider what it is wherein our holiness is to *consist*, as well as what it is which *depends upon* it. For through the want of this Caution, the empty *Picture* of Holiness is oft mistaken for the *Life*; there are that think them'selves *Holy*, when indeed they are *Hypocritical*, and many hope to be *sa'd* for their being *Cheats*. There were *Professors* amongst the *Jews*, who were indeed very punctual in the worship of *God*, and thence concluded they were *The Godly*; but 'twas a worship which consisted in the outward *washing of Cups* and *Platters*, in external *Rites* and legal *Ceremonies*, (which were but *shadows of things to come*;) in *spreading forth their hands*, and *making Prayers* for a pretense, in *fasting* often to appear *Righteous unto men*, in *keeping Sablaths* and *new Moons*, in *building the Tombs* of the *Prophets*, and *adorning the Sepulchers* of the *righteous*; when all the while they *neglected the weightier matters of the Law*, *Judgment*, *Mercy*, and *Faith*. They did so pull the *Motes* out of *other mens Eyes*, as not at all to see the *Beams* in their own. They did so strain at *Gnats*, as to swallow *Camels*; for they *devoured even Orphans and Widows Houses*, ( *Camels* Those



Those with a witness ) and were *partakers with their Fathers in the blood of the Prophets*, and so were far from being Followers of Peace and Holiness, unless as *Worldlings follow their Traffick for filthy Lucre*; dealing as *Hucksters in Religion*, and *Trading in Godliness*, as 'tis an *Instrument* onely of *Gain*. For they were call'd by our Saviour, (even then when at the Top of their *painted holiness*,) not onely *Serpents*, and *Vipers*, but *Brands of Hell too*, such as *could not escape Damnation*. (*Matth. 23. 33.*) Nor are there wanting amongst us *Christians*, who are religiously carefull to sprinkle themselves with *holy-water*, to say a *chapletfull of Ave Marias*, to visit the *Sepulchers of the Saints*, to cross their *Foreheads* and their *Breasts*, and to salute ye every Morning *in nomine Domini*. Nay some there are amongst us *Protestants* (for 'tis fit we should be *just* in our Observations,) who place a great deal of vertue in an exact *coming to Church*, in daily *reading so many Chapters*, in *lifting up to heaven both hands and eyes*, in *walking softly*, and *looking sadly*, and *hanging down the head* now and then like a *Bull-rush*; and so we may say they have attain'd to an *hansom Outside of Religion*, that they are well-fashion'd *Christians*, as addressing themselves

to God with a *Civil Carriage*, (such as well behav'd *Enemies* do seldom fail of,) But so far from being *Followers of Peace and Holiness*, that they want the very *Body*, much more the *Soul* of Christianity, whilst they will rather sow the *Seeds* of the most execrable *Rebellion*, than comply vvith Superiours in things *Indifferent*, vvhich cannot but be lawfull, because *Indifferent*; and not onely lawfull, but binding too, as soon as the signature of *Authority* is stamp'd upon Them. Do These men think there is a *God*, or a *Devil*, a *Corruption* of the *Body*, or *Immortality* of the *Soul*, an Hour of *Death*, or a Day of *Judgment*, vvho vvill rather break *Peace* vvith all their *Governours*, than submit to the use of a *Publick Liturgy*, vvhich is not onely lawfull, but transcendently good, so long as establish'd by *Law* and *Canon*? I vvish that all sorts of men vvho are immediately concerned in vvhat I say, vvould but take this obvious Truth into their serious Consideration; That as there vvere Things under the *Law*, (such as the Rite of *Circumcision*, and *Forbearing Swines Flesh*,) vvhich (however commanded by God himself,) vvere not commanded for being Good, but vvere Therefore onely good, because commanded; so things *Indifferent* under the *Gospel*, though

though they are not commanded for being *Necessary*, do yet become *Necessary* by being *commanded*; and are *mediately* commanded by God himself, as far as *commanded* by *That Authority*, which God hath *commanded* us to obey. From whence it follows unavoidably, That what may *lawfully* be *done*, before commanded; as soon as *commanded*, cannot lawfully be *omitted*. For *Rebellion* against the *Second Table*, is as bad as *Rebellion* against the *First*. And so they cannot be followers of *Peace*, or *Holiness*, who in a meer *pretense* of Holiness do *binder* Peace. An hearty *Follower of Peace*, will \*follow the *Things that make for Peace*. He will not be so much as a *Non-conformist*; but press with earnestness after *Unity*, by *Uniformity* in the Church. And if his *Conscience* hath any *Scruples*, arising merely from the *weakness*, not from the *wilfulness* of the man, he will infinitely rather *forsake* his City, or his Country, than *stay* in either to its *Disturbance*.

§ 23. Such was the pious Exhortation of *Clemens Romanus* to the *Corinthians*, which he also made good by his own *Example*. Who (says he) *is there among you of tender Bowels, and Generosity? let him sacrifice (if he is such) his private Interest to the publick.* And say,

\* Rom. 14.  
19.

Τίς ἂν ἐν ὑ-  
μῖν ῥοπαῖος ἢ  
τὴ συνάγω-  
γας; εἰ πάντες.  
Εἰ δὲ οὐκ ὅ-  
σες, ὅς τις, ὅς  
ῥοπαῖος, ἐκ-  
χωρῶν, ἀπει-  
μεῖ, ὅτι ἐὰν βέ-  
ληται, ἐάντων  
τὸ ποιῆσαι  
τὸ χεῖρ ἐν-  
εργῶν ἐν  
ᾧ καὶ δεσ-  
πότων προ-  
σβύτηται.  
Clem. Rom.  
ad Corinth.  
Ed. Jun p. 59.

Παρατηρῶ  
 ὡς ἡρεῖ.  
 — αὐτὸς ἀ-  
 νὰ γὰρ αὐτὸς ὁ  
 Ἐπισκοπῶν  
 καταργεῖν.  
 Epiphanius ad-  
 vers. Carpocr. l. i.  
 Tom. 2.  
 p. 107.  
 \* Ἀρχεῖν μὲν  
 ἡν, καὶ παντὶ  
 λόγῳ ὡς ὁ  
 ὡς, καὶ τοῦ  
 ἀλλοῦ ἐπὶ τῷ  
 τῷ παντὶ εὐαν-  
 γελισμῷ, αὐτοὶ  
 αὐτοὶ ἀλλήλους  
 πόλεμον ἤγα-  
 γον, καὶ ὁ πῶ-  
 μόν ἡν ὁ δὲ  
 ἀσάστως αὐ-  
 τῶν, καὶ εἰ μὴ  
 σιμωδῶντες  
 ἰσχυρὰ τῷ  
 Προφῆτῃ.  
 βάλετέ με  
 εἰς τὸ θάλασ-  
 σον, καὶ πάν-  
 τες ὡς ὁ  
 ὡς ὁ καὶ  
 δουρὶ τῷ  
 ἐργῶν, &c.  
 Gregor. Pres-  
 byt. in Vita  
 Nazianz.  
 prope finem.

If I am either the Author or the Fautor of any Difference, I divest myself of All the Wealth and Honour which I enjoy, and inflict upon my self, a most gratefull Exile. Now that S. Clemens made good his Exhortation by his Example, I am induced to affirm from this particular Consideration, That I can find no better way to reconcile the several Authors who will have Clemens to be the Second and the Fourth Bishop of Rome, than by saying with Epiphanius, (till we can find a better reason,) That Clemens laid down his Bishoprick during the Empire of Tiberius, and took it up again in the Time of Nero. The first of which he did freely, and the second by compulsion; but Both in order to the Unity and Peace of Christians. Such was also the publick Spirit of the renowned \* Gregory Nazianzen, who gladly threw the Archbishoprick of Constantinople behind his Back, for the composing of the strife that arose about it. God forbid (said he at parting, to all the Prelates there met in the General Council,) that we whose Office 'tis to teach and to bring Peace to others, should scandalously break it amongst our selves. Rather let Me forsake my Throne, and be cast out of the City, than not contribute all I can to the publick Peace.

Ἀλλ' ὡς ὁ  
 Ἐπισκοπῶν

Ἐποκοπῆς θέλω αὐτοῖς. βολύειδε, πρῶτον τὰ κατ' ἐπι-  
 τὴς τὰ περιστάμενα. ἐμοὶ δ' ἀγαπῆτον ἡ ἐρημία, καὶ πάλιν,  
 καὶ νῦν. \* Like to this spake S. Chrysostom in  
 one of his Homilies to the People. That if  
 He were thought the Cause or the Occasion of  
 their Divisions, he would recede from his Arch-  
 Bishoprick, and be gon whither they pleas'd;  
 would suffer any thing rather than Schism,  
 which he protested he thought a Sin as great  
 and damning even as Heresie; and which rather  
 than administer occasion to, he would strip  
 himself of the Rich and Splendid Preferment  
 which he possess'd. A Charity like That of  
 the Prophet Jonas, who for the quieting of the  
 Tempest, chose to be cast into the Sea: And to  
 preserve a whole Ship, was easily content with a  
 private Ruin. Which Example of S. Chrysostom  
 and other Fathers more Primitive, every honest  
 man will follow in these our Days, if he is ear-  
 nestly a follower of Peace and Holiness. And  
 this is one of the chiefest Touchstones, where-  
 by to difference a weak from a wilfull Brother.  
 They who do not διώκειν τὰ τ' εὐαγγέλιον, pursue with  
 eagerness the Things which do make for Peace,  
 do not serve God solidly in the Duties of the  
 First and the Second Table, in Piety and Pro-  
 bity, in Godliness and Honesty, in loving God  
 F f with

\* Εἰ μὴ ἐν  
 τῷ τῷ ὑπο-  
 πῶτον ἔ-  
 μοι ἀγα-  
 πῶτον ἡ ἐ-  
 ρημία, ὅτι πε-  
 ρὶ βολύει-  
 δος ἐκκλη-  
 σίας ἔσται μί-  
 α. Chrysost. in  
 cap. 4. Epist.  
 ad Ephes. Ho-  
 mil. XI. sub  
 finem.

with all their *Hearts*, which is to serve him in *Holiness*, and their Neighbour as themselves, which is to follow *Peace* with all men; and so they want the *two Hinges*, on which the *Door of Salvation* does chiefly *turn*, and whereupon does clearly hang All the *Law* and the *Prophets*.

§ 24. I cannot follow *Peace* enough, in the Discourse I am upon for the following of it, till I observe how the *Prosperity* does most especially depend on the *Peace* of Christians; and also say by what *means*, as well as by whose *Instrumentality*, we may attain to so much *Peace* and *good Agreement* amongst our selves, as may *redeem* some of the *Credit* which we cannot but have *lost* by our foul *Divisions*. There being no greater *Stumbling-block*, either to Those that are *without*, or *within* the Church, than the *Multitude* of the *Seets* which are seen amongst us. For whilst 'tis taken by them for granted, (and also confessed by our selves,) that *True Religion* can be but *one*; 'tis natural for them to infer, That wheresoever there is *Truth*, there must be *Unity*; at least in men of the same Profession. Whereupon whilst they observe, how the Professors of *Christianity* do stand *divided* amongst *themselves*, and that in point of *Opinion*,



as well as *Practice*, they easily slide into a Jealousie, touching the *Tenor* and the *Truth* of the whole *Profession*. Now the way to make Peace, and remove the Scandal, is not to *conquer* them into orthodoxy by dint of Argument alone; (though *That* indeed is one of our fittest *Weapons*;) as vvell because the greater part have not light enough to see a victorious *Truth*, as because, if they have, they are not *bumble* enough to own they have liv'd in *Errour*. No, the *hopefullest* way left, (for ought I am able to apprehend,) is not to mention Those Doctrines, vvherein we find by Experience we always *differ*; and to *insist* on those alone, wherein we find by Experience we all *agree*. A thing vvhich cannot be brought about by all the *Subjects put together*, but perhaps with ease enough by the *Kings of Christendom*; as vvell because they are but *few*, and therefore the fitter to *determine*, as because they are *Supreme*, and of Power to *execute*.

§ 25. For it happily falls out, through the Evidence of Truth, and the good Providence of God, That though we *differ* in *Superstructures*, yet we *agree* in the *Foundation*, and *Fundamentals* of Christianity. Which *Fundamentals*, as they are \**Few*, and therefore easie to be remem-

F f 2

ber'd,

\* Rerum absolutè necessarium ad salutem, non magnum esse numerum, R. Jacobus arbitratur in sua Respons. ad tertiam Observat. Perronii Cardinalis.

\* Et ferè ex  
eque omnibus  
probanur qui  
se Christianos  
dici postulant.  
Id. ibid.

ber'd, so are they also very \* *Plain*, and therefore easily *understood*; and that by all sorts of People, who are not flatly Fools, or Mad-men. As the *wittiest* or the *most learned* cannot need to know *more*, so the *most simple* and *illiterate* cannot easily know *less*, than what it is *to fear God, and to keep his Commandments*, which yet does grasp the *whole Duty* of Man as *Man*. Again, it is the whole Duty of Man as *Christian*, to have a *practical Knowledge* of *Jesus Christ, and him Crucified*. And as the wisest man living needs not know any thing *more*, so the most learned of the Apostles would not know any thing *else*. Another Summary of Religion, (as to the practical part of it, which is the main,) we have express'd in Three words, both from a *Prophet*, and an *Apostle*. A Summary so *short*, and yet so *copious*, that as a man the most *unskilfull* cannot easily know *less*, so the most learned and subtil Doctor is not bound to practise *more*, than *to do Justice, and to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with his God; or to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World*.

§ 26. Now if 'tis granted and agreed by every Sort of Real Christians, That the *Creed* and the *Commandments* are comprehensive of the *All* that is *Fundamental*, or of *Necessity* in Religion,

ligion, for *Faith*, and *Præctice*; and if All *under* Authority will but allow it to be the privilege of such as are placed *in* Authority, to judge of the *Decency* and the *Order* which *S. Paul* in the general, and every Nation in particular thinks it a duty to observe in the *publick Worship*; (to wit, the *Place*, and the *Time*, and the *Manner* of its performance, which being but *Accidents*, or *Adjuncts*, or *Externals* of Religion, should not be differ'd about by *Them* who fully agree in its *Essentials*;) It will be difficult to imagin, how the *Divisions* and *Separations* which are so *many*, and so *wide* as we see they are, can be able to escape a most happy *Closure*. A thing which the *Preachers* can but *preß*, and the best of the *People* can but *pray for*, but the *Rulers* of the Earth can easily bring into *Effect* too, if their *Endeavours* shall be as *heartly*, as their *Authority* is *divine*, and their *Power* *cogent*. Which how can they possibly employ unto a better end or use, than is the *binding up* the *Wounds* of a *bleeding Saviour*, who owns himself to be the *Head* of That *mangl'd Body*, whereof the greatest men on Earth are but *loſey Members*? Now the better to prevail with men of all Ranks, both with *Them* who are *in Authority*, and with *Them* who live *un-*

\* Ecclesia  
Romana multa  
hodie ob-  
servat ceu  
antiquas neces-  
saria, quae ve-  
tus Ecclesia  
vix nōrat,  
certè non ita  
usurpabat,  
tanquam pla-  
nè essent Ne-  
cessaria. H.  
Casaub. E-  
pist. 710.  
p. 912.

der it, I would present but *Two things* to their respective Considerations; First, That they who are in *Authority* ought not to urge the *Accidentals* and *Externals* in Religion, with as much vehemence as they do the *Essentials* of it; nor \* create *too many* Necessities in the use of things Indifferent, where God himself has created *none*. Next, That the people *under Authority* ought not to lessen their Obedience to God *in Man*, by still pretending their obligation of obeying God *rather* than Man. An Axiom *True* indeed at *all Times*, but yet at *those times* *impertinent*, and urged quite *out of Season*, when God does *choose* to be obey'd by our obedience to his Vicegerents. Who, if they have *any right at all* to make positive Laws, must inevitably make them of Things *Indifferent*.

§ 27. I press the former consideration; with due submission to Authority, and in behalf, (not of *wilfull*, but) of *truly-weak* Brethren, because I conceive the Laws of Men can reach no farther than the Objects of *outward Sense*; and therefore cannot punish *Avarice*, *Pride*, or *Malice*, though they can and do *Invasion*, *Theft*, and *Murder*; Nor wrong *Opinions* in Religion, whilst they quietly lye *sleeping*, or disturb nothing more than their Owner's *Minds*; but  
only

onely as breaking forth of their *Mouths*, and at last running out at their *fingers ends*. I know the Sword is apt to *terrifie*, but not *instruct*; to change a Sectary's *Confession*, but not his *Creed*; and therefore the Maladies of the *Spirit* are to be *Spiritually* dealt with, to work their Cure. Not by the *Gibbet*, or the *Jayl*, but by the force of sound Doctrine, and argumentative Conversation. A man who wanders out of his way for want of *light* onely, and not *Sobriety*, (overtaken, not with Drink, but with the Darkness of the Night,) deserves a *Lantern* for his Direction, a great deal rather than a *Rod*. He would be thought a strange Organist who should not scruple to *break* his Pipes as oft as he finds them *out of Tune*. Nor could our Magistrates think kindly of God himself, should he *recall* them with a *Thunderbolt*, as fast as he sees them going *astray*.

§ 28. And as for such reasons as These I press the *First* Consideration, so I discern as great reasons, (and such as make as much for Peace) to resume the *Second*. For though *Ceremonies* and *Rites* are onely *Accidents* in Religion, yet *Obedience* to *Authority* cannot but pass for an *Essential*. Because whatever God commands us by his *Moses* and his *Aaron*, his  
Zerub-

Zerubbabel and his *Jeshua*, his anointed Lieutenants, both *King* and *Priest*, he does as *really* and as *truly*, and as *authoritatively* command us, as what he commands us by a *Voice*, or an *Hand* from *Heaven*. And seeing the same God that saith, *Thou shalt not worship a Graven Image*, does also say at the same time, as well as in the same Decalogue, *Honour thy Father and thy Mother*, (whether private or publick, Ecclesiastical, or Civil,) It is by consequence as *Immediate* a Sin against God, to shew a *contempt* of That Authority which God hath commanded us to obey, as 'tis to *worship a graven Image*, or to *take God's Name in vain*.

§ 29. Now might I speak without Censure, even by speaking with submission to all Superiours, (as well as to others of more Research and better Discretion than my self,) I would adventure to affirm it as the Conclusion of the whole matter, That when Peace cannot be had by such a *reciprocal Self-denial* as I have now pleaded for, in Them that are vested with Authority, and in Them that live under it; by *Compassion* in the former, and by *Compliance* in the later; by *Condescension* in the one, and by *Submission* in the other; but each will have his *whole Will*, and not admit of a *Composition*;  
nothing



nothing but *Power Irresistible* can succour such as *make* Laws, against the Violence and Incursions of such as are stouter than to *Obey* them. Nor will a wise man expect to have *protection* under the *Laws* and the *Makers* of them, any longer than they *Both* shall be so *protected*.

§ 30. But I return to that Point, from which I have made a very *pertinent*, because a *profitable* Digression; nor yet a *Digression* from my *Text*, but from the Thread of my Discourse touching the *Nature*, and the *Necessity* of *Peace* and *Holiness*. Which being both of such Importance, as that our *Happiness* does depend upon the *earnestness* of our *Pursuit*, How can we choose but be persuaded to do a thing which is so *Natural*, as that a man would think it should be *hard not to do it*? For find we any thing more *Natural*, than to be *Lovers of our selves*, and so to *covet* those things which we believe to be the most for our *own Advantage*? A little Rhetorick (one would think) should be sufficient to persuade us to *choose our Interest*, and so to *follow* even with *earnestness* the necessary *means* of our being *Happy*. Be we never so *illiterate*, or be we never so *perverse*, yet through the little which hath been spoken of *Peace* and

*The Application.*

*Holiness*, (whether as separate, or in conjunction,) we cannot be ignorant of their *Nature*, or unconvinc'd of their *Necessity*.

§ 31. If then in respect of their *Common Nature*, They are as 'twere the *two Armes*, which do imbrace the whole *Decalogue* or Ten Commandments of the Law; we must never flatter our selves that we are Christians *good enough*, until we find our *Obedience* to be *impartial*; that is, as well to the *first* as to the *second* Table, and no less to the *second* than to the *first*. Nor may we ever give our selves *Rest*, until we See we have attain'd to this *Comparative perfection*; I mean a *singleness* of *Heart*, and a love of obedience without reserve. Our *respect* (like that of the *Psalmist*) must be to *All God's Commandments*, and we must study to live a peaceable and quiet life in *All* Godliness and Honesty, (*1 Tim. 2. 2.*) We must not be *kinder* or *more indulgent* to one Commandment than to another, (whether *byass'd* by *Custom*, or *Education*;) but rather keep our selves in *Awe* by chewing on *That* of the Apostle; *Whosoever offends in one point is guilty of All.* Jam. 2. 10.

Thus we must argue from the *Nature* of Peace and Holiness. And, after a manner not unlike, we ought to argue from their *Necessity*.

For

For if in respect of their *Necessity*, they are as 'twere the *two Hinges*, upon which the very *Door* of Salvation *turns*; or (if you please) the *Two Wings* (as S. \*Bernard calls them) wherewith the *Soul* of a Christian *soar's* up to Heaven; Lord! how nearly does it concern us, to *follow* them both as is here requir'd? and to *pass* the whole *Time* of our *sojourning* here in *fear*? What manner of men ought we to be in the future Course of our Conversation? To follow *Holiness* and *Peace*, concerns us as much as *Salvation* comes to; that is, as much as our *Souls* are *Worth*. Fail of *these* if we *dare*, unless we are so *stout*, that we *dare* be *damn'd*. But yet how many of our *Fiduciaries* do *miss* of heaven, meerly by thinking they *cannot* miss it? because (forsooth) to the *Regenerate* 'tis a Thing perfectly *unavoidable*? And what numbers of *Solifidians* do make it *difficult* to be *sav'd*, by making it *easier* than God will have it? by thinking Salvation is to be had at a *cheaper Rate*, than that of *following Peace and Holiness*? Now can there be any thing more *adviseable*, than that other mens *mischiefs* should keep us *safe*? and we receive the *whole benefit* without the *least danger* of their unhappiness? Mark well the *reason* which here is urg'd for

\* Bernard in  
Serm. 4. de  
Oratione &  
Jejunio.  
p. 113.

the fixing of the *Act* on the *double Object*. (I shall but paraphrase the Text in a broader English,) *Follow Peace and Holiness*, if for no other reason, at least for *This*, because ye are *happy*, if ye *doe*; and *damn'd for ever*, if ye do *not*.

*Less* than *This* we must not *preach*, and *more* than *this* we need not *learn*.

But if *This* of it self cannot find sufficient Place in our Consideration, yet if we have any the least respect to our *Secular Interest* and *Advantage*, as we desire to be free from the *Charge* and *Costliness* of Sin, and to *thrive* by God's Blessing *upon* All we set our hearts and our hands unto; or if we have any the least respect to our own *good Name*, and *Reputation*, as we desire to leave behind us a *fair Report*, and to be honourably mention'd by them that dwell round about us; or if we have any the least respect to our inward *Quiet* and *Tranquillity*, as we desire to have the *Peace* of a *cleansed Conscience*, which is in *Solomon's Accompt* a *Continual Feast*; or if all these together cannot ingage our Resolutions, yet if to these we add That which before was hinted, If we have any the least respect to the *Righteous Judge of all the World*; as we desire to *escape from the Wrath*

*Wratb to come, and to enter with an Euge, into the Joy of our Lord, Let us think of these Things when the Sermon's ended.*

*And the God of Peace and Holinesß sanctifie us throughly; That the whole of every one of us, both Body, Soul, and Spirit, may be kept blamelesß unto the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*To Him be Glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

A

A

§ 1.

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ing  
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two



O F  
 ABSTAINING  
 FROM ALL  
 APPEARANCE  
 O F  
 E V I L.

1 THESS. 5. 22.

*Abstain from all Appearance of evil.*

§ 1. **I**T was the Fancy of a wise, and an honest Heathen, that all a rational man's Duty might be express'd in two words, ἀνέχεσθαι, *Bear*, and *Forbear*; the *first* implying *Patience* under the *evil* of *Affliction*, the *second* *Abstinence* from the *evil* of *Sin*. Now in this Precept of our Apostle, we have one of the two *Hinges*, on which does *hang* the *whole* Duty of

of man as man. For whatsoever is a man's Duty may be referr'd to two Heads, His *Abstaining from evil*, and his *doing that which is Good*. Nay forasmuch as 'tis impossible to abstain from all evil and from all Appearance of it, without the *doing* of what is Good, and *persevering* unto the end too; (because the want of Perseverance is Simply evil, and cannot stand with that *Abstinence* which is from all the very face or Appearance of it,) I shall not sure be too profuse in Speaking the *pitbiness* of my Text, if I shall say 'tis *comprehensive* of the whole Duty of a Christian. For if we abstain from *unbelief* and *misbelief* of Christ's Gospel, and from all *disobedience* to Christ's commands, and from the *scandalous Appearance* both of the one and of the other; we do but barely do as much as my Text requires, and the God whom we serve can exact no more.

§ 2. In the Discussion of the Words, there are These things to be consider'd.

First, The *Nature* of the Act, which is very Good; it is ἀνίχεσθαι, *Abstain*. Next, the *Quality* of the Object, and that is evil; it is ἀπὸ πάντων, *Abstain from evil*. Thirdly, the very great extent both of the Act and of the Object; it is ἀνίχεσθαι ἀπὸ πάντων, *abstain from all evil*. And then

then because the word *evil* is of a *double* signification, importing equally the *Species*, and the *Appearance* of any Object, here is therefore requir'd a *double Abstinence*; one from all the *kinds* of evil, and another from all the *occasions* of it. *That* is required as the *End*, and *This* as the *Medium* conducing to it. We must abstain from the *Occasions* and *Opportunities* of evil, that so we may be the better *able* to abstain from the *Species* and *Presence* of it.

But first of all to the end that our very *Abstinence* may not be *Evil*, even then when it makes the most *goodly shew*; we must *abstain* from the *evil* of *seeming onely* to be *abstemious*; that is to say, from the *evil*, of being *abstemious* in *Hypocrisie*. For the World is too full of those *Modern Pharisees*, who often *violate* the Text by its *Authority*; and so insist upon the *Letter*, in opposition to the *Scope*, and the *Tenor* of it, that they *rebell* against the *Precept* by their *obedience*; and offer violence to the *Law* in its own *defence*. For (say They within themselves) it is not said by the Apostle, Abstain from all *Evil*, but from all *Appearance* of it; as if he meant not so much to forbid the *Sin*, as the *Scandalous manner* of its *commission*. As if he had thought with Them of *Sparta*, That the *abominable*

minable Thing is not to *steal*, but to be caught; not the *Irregularity*, but *Notoriety* of the fact. And as if *This* were either the *whole*, or the *prime* Importance of the Text, you shall have many *So* abstain from *all Appearance* of evil, as to satisfy themselves in the *Injoyment* of the evil, because they abstain from the *bare Appearance*.

§ 3. Thus the *Adulterers* in the *Proverbs* may be said to have abstain'd from the *Appearance* of evil, because *she wiped her Mouth*, and look'd demurely, and said that *She had done no wickedness*. (*Prov. 30. 20.*) What was wanting to her in *chastity*, She endeavour'd to supply by the *care* and *caution* wherewith She fin'd. As if the *Rule* were to be taken in this Sense also, *De non apparentibus & non existentibus eadem est ratio*. I have *done no wickedness*, because it *does not appear* that I have done it. My way of Sin has been as *close*, and as *indiscernable*, as *the way of an Eagle in the Air*, or the *way of a Ship in the midst of the Sea*. (*v. 19.*) And if there is either no God at all, or else a God that hath no *omniscience*, or that doth not *employ* it on trivial objects, I have abstained from *all evil*, because from *all Appearance* of it.

Thus the *Pharisees of old* may be said to have  
abstain'd

*abstain'd from the Appearance of evil, because however they were guilty of eating up Orphans and Widows houses, yet they did it so devoutly, by their fasting twice a week, and their long Prayers for a pretense, that notwithstanding they were vile in the sight of God, our Saviour tells us, they appear'd Righteous unto men. And how was that, but by abstaining from the Appearance at least of all unrighteousness? They did Noctem peccatis, & Fraudibus addere Nubem; that is, they Sinn'd out of sight as much as might be; They were circumspect and wary in all their wickedness. If any covetousness or cruelty of more than ordinary size was to be committed, they presently cover'd it with a Corban, and were Deceivers of men in the name of God.*

Thus the Samaritans heretofore may be said to have *abstain'd from the Appearance of evil*; because how *sinfull* soever they were *Themselves*, they did yet make a *Conscience* of coming near unto a *Sinner*. Every *Jew* was thought sick of a *noli me tangere*, and was accordingly kept off with a *Ne attingas*. *Stand by thy self, come not near to me, for I am holier than Thou, (Isa. 65. 2, 3, 5.)*

And thus the rigidest \* Professors of Grace

H h 2

and

Matth. 23.  
28.

\* Πρώτον οὐκ  
μὴ μόνον κα-  
λέσθαι ῥησισ-  
τας, ἀλλὰ καὶ  
ἔτι καὶ τὸ  
ἐξουσιάζειν αὐ-  
τοὺς ὡς ἱερεῖς.  
Ignat. in Ep.  
ad Magnesios.

and Godliness here at home, have a *Conscience* so *callous*, as to suffer them to *rebell* against their Governours; but yet so *delicate*, as not to permit them to *obey*. A *Conscience* so *wide*, as to *swallow Camels*; but yet so *streight*, as to *strein at Gnats*. A *Conscience* so *tough*, as to bear a *Schism*; and yet so *tender*, as to scruple at a *Ceremony*. They are not *Sabbath-breakers*, or *Swearers*, (for those are Sins of *no Profit*;) nor are they ordinarily *drunk* with *excess* of *Wine*; (for *That* is both a *disgracefull* and *costly* sin;) but they are *Serious* and *Demure* in all their projects, and seek the *ruin* of a *Church* in as great *Sobriety*, \* as *Julius Caesar* did that of a *Commonwealth*; Thus affecting to *abstain* from *all Appearance of evil*, when they have *nothing* in them of *Good*, but in *Appearance*. Inasmuch as I may say, without breach of *Charity*, that since the \**word* *Godliness* was *usurp'd* to supplant the *Thing*, a greater Improvement hath been made in the *Trade of Knavery* and *Deceit*, than had been ever known before in any less pretending *Times*.

§ 4. This must therefore be the Subject of our *first* and *chief* care, that we abuse not *our selves*, as well as *others*, by taking *That* to be *Holiness*, which is *Hypocrisie*; That we *abstain* in

\* M. Catonis verbum est, ad evertendam Rempublicam sobrius accessisse. Sueton.

\* Atrocissimum sub sancti nominis professione peccatur. Salv. de Providentia. Magis damnable est malitia, quam Titulus bonitatis accusat; & reatus impij est pius Nomen. Id. c. 11.



in sincerity from the *Evil it self*, and not from the *Sole Appearance* of it.

Our *Second* care must be, that in the course of our *Abstinence*, we be not onely *Sincere*, but *Impartial* too. 'Tis not enough that we abstain from *This* or *That single* evil, to which perhaps we are not carried by any *natural Inclination*, or have contracted *Averseness* to; For it follows in the Text, ἀπέχεσθε ἀπὸ παντός, abstain from *All* evil.

Our *Third* care must be, that in the management of our *Abstinence*, we be *wise* and *prudent*, as well as *impartial* and *sincere*. Which is not onely a very *laudable*, but ( in one respect at least ) a very *needfull* Qualification. For we know 'tis very *needfull* that we be *innocent as Doves*; which we can very hardly be, unless we be *wise also as Serpents*. I mean so *wise* as to *abstain* from those *Indifferent* sorts of *Good*, which are *Incentives*, and *Occasions*, and *Introductions* to *evil*. This we learn from the word εὐδοκίας, as here 'tis taken by our Translators in its *second* signification. Abstain not onely from *all the Sorts*, but ( over and above ) from *all the Appearances* of evil. Not onely from the kinds, but *Occasions* of it. And these I intend shall be the Boundaries of my following Discourse.

§ 5. To shew the *Goodness* and the *Necessity* of the *first* particular of the *Three*, to wit, our *Abstaining from* what is *evil*, I cannot better take my *Rise* then from this pertinent observation; That even *Abstinence in it self* is a considerable *Vertue*, although it be onely from *Things Indifferent*, although it be but from *Things*, whereof we are permitted a free *Injoyment*. *Augustus Caesar* in *Suetonius*, the Emperour *Tacitus* in *Vopiscus*, the *Phliasii* in *Xenophon*, and the *Abstemii* in *Athenæus*, have been deservedly applauded for this one reason. And as the *Rechabites* were commended by God Himself, for not departing from the *Will* of their Father *Jonadab*; so was it *Jonadab's* commendation, that he *commanded his Sons to abstain from Wine*, not at all for being *evil*, but rather *dangerously good*. Now that *Abstinence* is *good*, although it is not from things which are simply *Evil*, seems to be evident even from This (if from no other) reason, that it *enables and prepares* us for the great *Duty of Self-denial*. It is a *practice* of that *Dominion* we ought to have over *our selves*; a prudent *Exercise* of the *Victory* which both our *Reasons* and our *Wills* should still obtain over our *Appetites*. For by *denying* unto our selves some things

Sueton. l. 2.  
c. 72, 73, 77.  
Vopisc. in vi-  
ta Taciti Im-  
per. p. 414.  
Xenophon in  
syllab. lib. 5.  
p. 441.  
Athenæus  
l. 2 c. 6. etiam  
l. 1. c. 8.  
Valer. Max.  
l. 4. c. 3.

Jer. 35. 14.

Hoc Sancti  
viri habent  
proprium.  
quod ut sem-  
per ab illicitis  
longè sint,  
à se plerum-  
que etiam li-  
cita abscin-  
dunt. Greg.  
Mag. Dial.  
l. 4. c. 11.

things *lawfull* and *allow'd*, we may attain to a *facility* of abstaining from the things that are most *forbidden*.

§ 6. And this alone would be enough, in case there were not (as there are) any other reasons, why *The Church* and *State* too prescribe the *Abstinences* of *Lent*. For as the annual observation of *Lent* it self is (in the Judgment of *S. Jerom*) of Apostolical Institution; so are its *Abstinences* from *Flesh* (though a thing *Indifferent*) no less enjoyned in a *Religious* than in a *Civil* Consideration, if together with the *Quality* and *Condition* of our Meals, we have regard unto the *Temper* and *Measure* of them. Nay by the help of a Distinction, our single *Abstinence* from the *Quality* may be in both considerations. For what Authority does command upon a *civil* Accompt onely, the People certainly must *obey* upon the Accompt of their *Religion*, if they do regulate their Religion by the *express Word of God*, which streightly chargeth them to *submit to every Ordinance of Man*. (Meaning the *Ordinances of Man*, which are not *opposite* or *cross* to the *Laws of God*.) To abstract our *Abstinence* from our *obligedness* to *obey*, (and from the other great End which first I mention'd,) is to abstract at the  
same

1 Cor. 8. 8.

1 Tim. 4. 4.

*Sunt deinde  
Media, qua  
quidem nec  
bona esse nos-  
cuntur, nec  
mala, possunt  
tamen indif-  
ferenter &  
bene pariter  
& malè vel  
prohiberi, vel  
juberi, sed ma-  
lè nullatenus  
in his à Sub-  
ditis obediri.*  
Bernard. in  
Epist. 7. ad  
Adam Mo-  
nachum.

*p. 1394.  
Ex his sunt,  
jejunare, vi-  
gilare, lege-  
re, &c. Idem  
ibidem.*

*\* 1 Cor 8. 8.  
a De Philo-  
xeno Cythe-  
rio. Apicio,  
aliisque, con-  
sule Athe-  
nazum, l. 1.  
c. 6.*

same instant the merit of *vertue* from our *Absti-  
nence*. For *Meat commendeth us not to God*,  
(as saith *S. Paul* to the *Corinthians*; and every  
*Creature of God is good, if received with Thanks-  
giving*, (saith *He* to *Timothy*;) And though  
the preference of *Fish* before the *Meat* of the  
*Shambles*, is so far *innocent*, and *lawfull*,  
as 'tis left to our *Christian Liberty*; yea so  
far *necessary*, and *binding*, as 'tis *commanded*  
by that *Authority* which God hath *commanded*  
us to *obey*; yet, *abstracted* from the *Precept* of  
such *Authority*, it may be *Wantonness* in one,  
and in *another*, *Superstition*. For *Meats* are  
all of such *Indifference*, if *antecedently* con-  
sider'd, and with the *economy* of the *Gospel*, that  
as, *if we eat Flesh, we are not the better*, so if  
*we eat none, we are not the worse*. Nay a man,  
by eating *Fish*, may make *provision* for the  
*Flesh*; especially when he makes it to *swim* in  
*Wine*. He may by Both so *fill* his *Belly*, and so  
*fulfill* his *Appetite*, as that his *Abstinence* from  
*Flesh* may but conduce to his *sensuality*; and  
all his *Lenten entertainment* prove but a *sacri-  
fice* to his *Lust*. The most voluptuous *Apo-  
lausticks*, in the Accompt of *Athenæus*, be-  
came infamous for nothing more, than their  
passionate *Doatages* upon *Fish*. Nor could the

very

very learned \*Cook, in the old Comædian, provide the Amorous young men a more strong *Incentive*. From whence it follows that to keep *Lent*, as 'tis a Time of Mortification, is not so carefully to *abstain* from the *Kind* and *Quality* of our Meals, as from the over-great *Richness* and *Fulness* of them. So that the due keeping of *Lent*, in point of eating and drinking, consisteth wholly or chiefly in these two Things; to wit, our *Abstinence* from the *kind*, which is forbid by *Man's Law*; and our *Abstinence* from the *measure*, which is forbidden also by *God's*. Each of These is a *Duty*, however *different* they are in *degree* of *Merit*. For that the *later* is the *greatest*, and most important, may appear by the great *Difference* betwixt the *reasons* of the goodness which lies in *Both*. For our *Abstinence* from *Flesh*, is onely *good* because *commanded*; whereas our *Abstinence* from *evil*, is onely *commanded* because 'tis *good*. There the goodness is *accidental*, but here 'tis *natural*. There 'tis nothing but the *Consequent*, here the *Cause* of the Commandment. *There* 'tis capable of *ceasing* by *Dispensations* even from *Men*; whereas *here* the matter of it is *indispensable* even by *God*.

§ 7. This must therefore be our first and

li

our

\* --- μετὰ  
κλον ἐρωμέ-  
ντων ἔχον &  
παρῶν ἡ  
σὺν κατε-  
τήν παρ-  
ῶν σπῆ-  
ς τῶν δὲ  
ἡ π-  
σῶν ἰχθύ-  
ων ἡ ποι-  
κίλων ἐν-  
βερματί-  
σιν γλαφυροῖς  
καρπυ-  
μοῖς. An-  
thippus Co-  
micus apud  
Athenaum,  
l. 9. c. 15.  
p. 404.

our greatest Care, that we *abstain* from those things that are *simply evil*; and this in a *double Opposition* to two sorts of men, who divide a great part of the world between them; such as are *Hypocrites* on the *Right* hand, and *Antihypocrites* on the *Left*.

Touching the former of the two I shall say the less, the more I have spoken of them before, in my Introduction. Adding onely that They *abstain* from the *Appearance* of evil, as *broken Tradesmen* from the *semblance* of perfect *Beggary*. The *nearer* they are to the State of *Bankrupts*, they have their Artifices and Tricks whereby to seem so much the *Richer*. Or as *Antipater* had his *outside* all clad in *Black*, not because (as he pretended) it was the old *Macedonian habit*, but to *conceal* his whole *Inside*, as *lin'd* with *Purple*. We must not therefore follow *Them*, who *cry aloud* against the Sins they imbrace in *silence*, and *abstain* in such wise from *all Appearance* of evil, as to abstain from *no evil* but in *Appearance*. We must not so apprehend or mistake the Text, as if 'twere meant by *S. Paul* for an *Exhortative* to *Hypocrisie*; not so properly to abstain from the *Evil it self*, as from the *shew*, and *shadow* of it. No, the Text is to be held by a safer Handle; and our

Εἰ τὸ μὴ ἐ-  
νομίσει τὸ  
χεῖρ ἔχει  
ἀποστολῆς δὲ  
τῷ ὀνόματι  
τῶν συν-  
δωκῶν, καὶ  
ἐκείνοι πρὸς  
ἐξουσίαν  
τοῦτο τὸ  
ὄνομα ὁ  
τις τὸ, καὶ  
τὸ ἐστὶν  
ἡμῶν ὡς  
ἐν μαρτυρίᾳ  
αὐτοῦ, ἀν-  
τιπρὸς τὴν  
ἐκείνου μα-  
ρτυρίαν, καὶ  
τοῦτο τὸ  
πρὸς τὸν  
Gregor. Nyl  
sen. de Pro-  
fess. Christ.



our Argument is to run thus, *à minori ad majus*. If 'tis our Duty to abstain from all *Appearance of Evil*, how much *more* is it our Duty, to abstain from *all evil*? The *former* Abstinence is a *Vertue*, whensoever this *later* does either *attend*, or *go before* it; whereas for want of this *later*, the *former* Abstinence is a *Sin*.

§ 8. Yet not so great a Sin as *Theirs*, who in avoidance of *Hypocrisie*, do boldly rush into the greater, and worse extreme. Who being *asham'd* of seeming *piously* and *religiously* addicted, (as a thing not becoming their *Youth*, or *Quality*,) do therefore *proclaim* their Sin as *Sodom*, and commit it (with *Absolon*) *on the House Top*. Not onely *abstaining* from *all* that's good, but from *all Appearance* of it. As if to be thought a godly man, were the greatest unhappiness in the World, and therefore to be shun'd with the greatest Care. I shall exemplify what I say but in Three particulars. First, how many may we observe who easily enter into *Duels*, (and are *asham'd* not to do so) with such as speak to the *Dis honour* of a most despicable *Misfrit*, and yet will stand *unconcern'd*, when more is done to the *Reproach* of their *Master Christ*? Men so *stout*, that they *dare* be *damn'd*; and yet so eminent for their *cowar-*

Isa. 3. 9.

2 Sam. 16.  
22.

dize, that they *dare not* be patient of putting up the least *wrong*. Men of such *poor* and such *sordid* Spirits, as to *dread* the very *thoughts* and the *words* of Men, however *senseless* of the *hatred* and *wrath* of God. Men of such strange *Pusillanimity*, that they *dare not* indure the *Contempt* of this World, which God *himself* is *contemn'd* by, and yet is *silent*. A downright *speculative Atheist*, who *denies* and *derides* the God that made him, or a *practical Atheist* who dares do *both* in his *Conversation*, may walk the streets very *securely* without a weapon; has never a *challenge* sent to him for having *affronted* the Lord of *Glory*; who yet for any the *least affront* which he should *dare* to have done to an *handsom Idol*, had straight been *summon'd* into the *Field*, there to make satisfaction in *Tears of Blood*. Again, how many in our *Protestant Reformed* World, do seem to take as great a *Pride*, and make as open a *Profession* of being *eminent Apolausticks*, as that *voluptuous* sort of *Heathens*, whom *Eubulus* the Greek Comedian does *expose* upon the *Stage* for their *learned Surfeits*? who *laugh* at *Abstinence* as a *Foolery*; and look on all *Self denial* as arrant *Madness*. (A thing proceeding from nothing better than the *distemper'd Hypochondres*.) Who having learn'd

Eubulus in  
Amalthæâ  
introducitur  
Herculem  
Delitiarum  
vituperato-  
rem v. II.  
Causab. in  
Athen. l. 2.  
c. 23.

learn'd the deep *Science* of *Eating well*, and being able to make a *Treatment* as becomes *Criticks* in *Sensuality*, are apt to put a *greater value* both on *Themselves*, and their *Atchievement*, than if they had *taken the Town of Troy*.

\* Τὸν δὲ ἐκείνῳ μᾶλλον ἢ Τροίαν ἐλθεῖν.

Lastly, how many *Antihypocrites*, although *Professors of Christianity*, do vye with *Ovid*, and *Messalina*, the Emperour *Proculus*, and the rest of that heathen World, (for the recording of whose effronteries *Cornelius Agrippa* is to be blam'd,) in that they do not onely *disclose* the *real Enormities* which they have done, but also *boast of more Debauches*, than they ever had the *appetite*, or possibly the *strength* to be guilty of? Now he who so far hates *hypocrisie*, (which is a damnable abstaining from *appearance* onely all of *Evil*,) as to *glory* in his *Impieties*, and by consequence to abstain from the very *appearance* also of *good*, (whereby he does not onely *displease*, but *despise* his Maker,) is as one *flying from a Lion*, when behold a *Bear* meets him; or as one *leaning upon the Wall*, and a *Serpent* bites him. (*Amos 5.19.*) He is as one fallen, out of a *Feaver* into a *Fire*; and to be reckon'd, of the two, *the more horrid Devil*.

§ 9. In opposition to the *first* of the two *Extremes*,

\* Euripid.  
in Andromachâ Mene-  
laum intro-  
ducit sic lo-  
quentem.

Cornelius  
Agrippa de  
vanit. scient.  
cap. 63.

tremes, we must make our *first* step to raise us  
 Thus unto a *Second*. If Abstinence is so noble  
 and so necessary a Duty, though from Those  
 very things which are but *dangerously* Good,  
 what then is Abstinence from the objects which  
 are *damnably Evil*? To keep our selves far e-  
 nough from Such, we must carefully set before  
 us King *David's Method*; when being to qua-  
 lifie himself for an Approach to God's *Altar*,  
 he did not say *he would wash his Face*, but his  
*Hands in Innocence*. Besides it ought to be con-  
 sider'd that *all* the *Commandments*, saving two,  
 having been *negatively* propos'd, imply the  
*Bottom* of all our Duties to lie in our *Absti-  
 nence from evil*. As being That, without which,  
 even all our good Deeds will be *done in vain*;  
 yea and the *best* of all our Works will be but  
 handsome *Abo-ninations*. For the *highest* and  
 the most *positive* of all our Duties, are com-  
 prehended by *S. Paul* under these three Heads,  
 our *living soberly, righteously, and godly in this  
 present World, Tit. 2. 12*. But 'tis absolutely  
*impossible* that we should ever live *soberly*, un-  
 less by *abstaining from all Excess*; that we should  
 ever live *righteously*, unless by *abstaining from  
 all Injustice*; that we should ever live *godly*,  
 unless by *abstaining from all Prophaneness*. It

is a vain thing for any, to think of *loving* and *loving* God, who does not first of all *cease* to *injure* his *Neighbour* and *Himself* too. *Virtus est, vitium fugere*; The very *first* of all *Virtues* is a man's *Abstinence* from *Vice*; & *sapientia prima est, Stultitiâ caruisse*.—— The fear of the Lord, That is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding. *Job. 28. 28.*

§ 10. But however this is *necessary*, 'tis not enough, since we are far from being sure that this our *Abstinence* is *sincere*, unless by its being *impartial* too. For some of the *worst* of mankind may still *abstain* from *some* evils, although it be but by the means of some *occasional Averseness*, and possibly too for want of a *natural Inclination*. 'Tis very far from being enough, that we have *Tolerance* in *one* kind, or *Continence* in *another*, which in *Aristotle's* Judgment are but a couple of *Semivirtues*, (and yet 'twere well if most Christians would now attain to so good a Pitch;) no, nor is it quite enough that we have *Temperance* in them *Both*, however *This* is a *complete* and a *perfect* virtue. For this is only to *abstain* from those *grosser Evils*, which do affect either the *Touch* or the *Taste* with Pleasure. That is to say, with *such* Pleasure, as is equally *common* to *Men* with *Brutes*. No, when

when our *Parents* were first commanded to *abstain* from *That Tree*, which was *inclos'd* by God's *Precept* in the midst of the Garden, they were *implicitly* commanded to abstain from *all evil*. In as much as *all* the *Branches* of Sin and Wickedness, which from that time to this have *defil'd* our Nature, do owe their cursed *Derivation* to that *one Stock*. And by consequence it concerns us to advance a step farther; to plead and pant after, and contend for *such* an Abstinence, as is not onely from *This* or *That*, (for then the very worst of us might soon be Christians good enough,) but from *All* sorts of evil without exception; and so to comply with our Apostle in his important monosyllable, by taking the *object* of our Abstinence with its unlimited *universality*. For (that we may pass from the first to the second Particular in the Text) it is

Ἀπέχεσθε ὑπὸ παντός—

Abstain from *All* evil.

§ II. I say from *All*, for these *obvious*, but *usefull* Reasons, which I shall not onely *propose*, but humbly *submit* to consideration. First, because *He* who is indulgent to any *one* sort of Evil, cannot say that there is *one* from which he does *vertuously abstain*; nor is he certain what

*duration*



*duration* his *partial Abstinence* will be of. It being so easie for him to fall from *one nicked-ness to another*, that wheresoever the cunning *Serpent* gets in his *Head*, he draws his *whole Body* in with the greater Ease. As if the *contagion* that is in *Vice* were in proportion to the Links in the *Chain of Virtue*, our *Indulgency* to *one* is apt to *draw* the *rest* after. One rotten Action does as gladly *infect* another, as one *putrid Grape* does communicate its venom to *all* the *Cluster*. And the reason is very clear, why He who gives himself the Liberty to see i intemperately on *one Sin*, is *ipso facto* become obnoxious unto the Surfeiting upon *all*; because he has not any *Principle* or *Power* within him, by force of which he can be *sure* to *abstain* from *any*. And the reason of that reason is just as clear too. For the same *want of fear* to offend his Maker, the same *despight* offer'd to *Grace*, and the same *Callousness of Conscience*, which either *allows* or *betrays* him to any *one* wilfull Sin, leaves him *desitute* and *expos'd* to the *Power of All*. So that if, by not *committing*, he seems at any time to *abstain* from this or that sort of *Vice*, 'tis not his *Virtue*, but his *Luck*. And if any thing is to be thank'd, (besides the *restraining* Mercy of God, who does often set his

*Quaque confecta livorem ducit ab ura.*

Hook into the Wicked man's Nostrils,) he may thank his *Stars* for it ; at least his *Company*, or his *Custom*, or the *Laws* of the *Country* wherein he lives, or at least the good hap of his *Constitution*, as *not* sufficing him for *some* Sins, or *not inclining* him to *others* ; and many times so strongly *byass'd* to darling obliquities on the *left* hand, as to be carried by *the same* *Byass* from other obliquities on the *right*. There being *some* sorts of evil so *very* *opposite* unto each other, ( and *inconsistent* at the same *instant*, ) that to *abstain* from *one* *Extream*, is not laudable in a Professor who is *indulgent* unto the *other*. 'Tis *not* *thank-worthy* in a *Niggard*, not to be guilty of *Prodigality*. Nor is it the *Merit*, but the *necessity* of an extremely great *Coward*, if he is not found guilty of too much *Rashness*. It being a sad kind of *Virtue* which a Man owes onely to *Vice* ; as when he abstains from any *one* of two contrary evils, because he cannot commit them *Both*.

§ 12. Again, ἀπέχεσθαι ἀπὸ πάντων, Abstain from *All* evil, because the *wilfull* Transgression of *any one* of God's Commandments, makes us as liable to Judgment, ( though not to so many degrees of Torment ) as if we had broken *every one*. For what else can be the meaning of that saying

saying in *S. James*, that if a man keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all? He (for example) who abstains not from the *Intemperance* of the Tongue, (That enormous fleshly lust which is so regnant in these our days,) may be said to offend in one sole Point of Christianity; yet (like a little *Colloquintida* in a whole Pot of Broth) That offending in one Point sheds such an Influence upon others, as to invalidate and evacuate his whole Religion. *Jam. 1. 26.* The reason of which is very evident, in that the same God that saith, *Thou shalt not steal, or commit Adultery*, does also say at the same Time, in the same Decalogue, and by the very same Authority, *Thou shalt not take the Name of thy God in vain, nor bear false Witness against thy Neighbour.* And the Breach of these Precepts, when it is wilfull or habitual, is as damnable in its nature as the Transgression of the former, and all the rest. For as the whole Nature of Treason against the Majesty of the King, does lie as really in the compassing or contriving of his Death, as in all the most bloody and overt Acts that can be nam'd; and any one of those Treasons is as capital as a Thousand; so the whole Nature of Rebellion against the Majesty of God, does lie as much in

Jam. 2. 10.

the wilfull Breach of any one of his Commands, as in *all together* ; and Damnation is the wages, as well of *that one*, as of *all the rest*. And as when a man is hang'd for committing Treason, it is *cold comfort* to him, that he is hang'd but for *one Crime*, and *not* for *many* ; so 'twill but *little*, if at *all*, lessen the *misery* of the *Damn'd*, if at they were damn'd onely for *Drunkennes*, *Schism*, or *Heresie*, or for *another* such habitual and mortal sin, *not* for *Murther*, or *Adultery*, which were not laid unto their charge ; or rather for breaking the *Fifth Commandment*, than for transgressing the other *Nine*. And therefore since *Impenitence* is indispenably *destructive*, (though I know there is a *greater* and a *lesser* Damnation,) be it but in *one*, or in *many* evils, it must concern us to abstain with impartiality even from *All*.

§ 13. Again ἀπὸ παντὸς κακοῦ, Abstain from *All Evil* ; as well from the *least*, as from the *greatest* ; because our very *least Sins* do gather a *Greatness* to themselves, from the *greatness* of the *Object* we Sin *against*, and from the *Greatness* of the *Means* against *which* we Sin. (I mean our *Prayers*, and our *Sacraments*, and the frequency of our *Sermons*, by which whoever is not *mended*, is accidentally made *worse*.)

And

And because the least Sins are apt to lead into the greatest. Besides, *Siracides* said wisely in this sense also,) *He that despiseth small things shall perish by little and little.* Ecclus. 19.1. The least Sins therefore cannot possibly be so light, as that they may safely be slighted by us; because although what is *venial* can never lose its Distinction from what is *mortal*, yet 'tis worthily to be fear'd that a man may *Sin mortally*, by *pleasing* himself in his *venial Sins*; and by loving them *more* than the will of God. Nor are we *drown'd* with *more comfort*, by the *Sea's stealing in* through *little crevices* into our Ship, than by our Ship's being *suddenly* and *at once* cast into the *Sea*. Abstain we therefore even from *all*, the most *diminutive Peccadillos*, (as men of *Latitudes* in *Prædication* do love to call them,) not from *Evil* onely in *Deed*, but in *Word*, and *Thought* too. For if *Pythagoras* had rather a man should throw out a *Stone*, than a word or two rashly and at a venture; yea, if of every idle word Men shall give an account in the day of Judgment, how much more of every evil one, when *falseness* and *rancour* are cleaving to it? And we read that *evil Thoughts* which proceed out of the Heart are especially the things that defile the Man. Matth. 15. 18, 19, 20.

\* Αἰσχροτέ-  
ρον σοι ἔσται  
λίτον εἶναι  
βίβλιν, ἢ  
λίτον ἄρτον.  
Pythag.  
Math. 12.  
6.

A Truth discernable, as by *other*, so by *this* reason also, That many *customary* Sinners may be forcibly restrain'd from their *evil Actions*, who yet can *never* be restrain'd from their *evil Thoughts* too. For as *Crows* from *Carrions* are not forced to abstain by *Satiety it self*, but still abide upon the Place, as if they could never fill their *Eyes*, though they have their *Bellies*; so *customary* Sinners, when *Age* or *Sickness* hath made them *innocent* as to their *Actions*, do love to *think over* the Sins they have not *vigour* enough to *act*. They can no more cease from Sin which *Custom* has riveted in their Souls, than *Flies* inured to the *Shambles* are able to abstain from the *smell* of *Meat*. Now whether the *Evil* of our *Thoughts* be of *Wilfulness*, or *Infirmity*, we are to exercise our selves in *abstaining* from it. For we must *actually* abstain from all *wilfull* evil; and we must *studiously* abstain from all the evil of *Infirmity*, so as to *bate*, and to *deplore*, and to *strive against* it. This I say for our *Humiliation*; But I add for our *Comfort* too, that so long as we are *striving* with the utmost of our Ability against the *stream* of human Frailties, we are not liable to *Wrath*, in case the *violence* of the *Torrent* prevail against us. *Prevail against us* (I mean,) so as in

spite



spite of all our striving to have some residence, though not habitually to reign in our mortal Bodies. For when we strive against *That* from which we cannot so abstain, as to be every way sinless, Then we are reckon'd to abstain, so far forth as to be sincere. And though a Sinlessness is not, yet is a singleness or sincerity the indispensable Requisite of a Christian. And in this sense at least we must abstain from all evil; as well from the least, as from the greatest.

§ 14. Lastly, ἀπέχεσθαι ἀπὸ παντός, Abstain from all evil, although it shall not at all be simply, but accidentally such. Many hundreds of things there are, however reducible unto four or five Heads, which are not absolutely Evil, but yet are evil *ex accidenti*. And what is evil but accidentally, is simply Good. And so there are several good things, which though absolutely, and simply, and antecedently such, yet from the same, being consider'd in some Relations and Respects, it is a Christian man's Duty very carefully to abstain. And in consequence of This, Abstain from every good thing, which thy Conscience does condemn; and from every good thing, which thy Conscience doubts of; and from every good thing, by which thy Brother is made

made to *stumble*, and to *fall* headlong into Sin; and from every good thing which is *comparatively* evil, by being heedlessly *preferr'd* to what is very much better; and from every good Thing, which strongly administers an *Occasion*, and a *Temptation* unto evil. I say *abstain* from the *first* sort, because though *there is nothing unclean in it self*, (of all those Meats which are food for men,) yet to *him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean*, to Him (in that Error) it is *unclean*. Rom. 14. 14. And *abstain* from the *second* sort, because *he that doubteth is damn'd if he eat*, in that he eateth not of Faith, for *whatsoever is not of Faith is Sin*. Rom. 14. 23. And *abstain* from the *third* sort, because though every kind of edable is simply *Pure*, (and so may lawfully be eaten,) yet *it is evil for that man who eateth with offence*. And therefore *if thou hast Faith*, and understandest thy Christian Liberty, make a private use of it *betwixt God and thy self*. For happy is He who *condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth*. Rom. 14. 20, 21, 22. Again, *Abstain* from the *fourth* sort, because God hath declared He *will have Mercy rather than Sacrifice*, Mat. 9. 13. And the *saving* of a *Sheep* on the *Sabbath Day*, rather than the *resting* from bodily labour. (Mat.

*Mat. 12. 11.*) and rather a being *reconcil'd* to an *injur'd Brother*, than *bringing a Gift unto the Altar*, (*Mat. 5. 23. 24.* Last of all let us *abstain* from the *fifth* sort of Objects, which are simply *good* enough, but accidentally *evil*, because of the Precept of our Apostle in the words of my Text; which, though it may seem to be a *rigorous*, is yet a *mercifull* Command. For 'tis *easier*, whilst we are *innocent*, to *abstain* from the guilt of any *one* act of Sin, than having yielded unto *one*, to forbear *another*. *Abstinence* from *evil* is nothing else but an *Act* of *Fasting*. And certainly He who cannot *fast* from the *Approaches* of Impiety, will much *less* *fast* from the *Presence* of it. If we cannot well *abstain* from *conversing* with the *Occasions*, how much *less* from the *Act* of a pleasant evil? or if not from the *Act*, how much *less* from the *Habit*? *Ægrius ejicitur, quàm non admittitur Hostis.* 'Tis very much easier *not to admit*, than to *drive out* an Enemy. Very much easier to *prevent*, than to *cure* a *Leprosie*. Which our Apostle well considering, was not onely of the *Opinion*, but made it the Rule of his *Practice* also, (in his whole Ninth Chapter of the First Epistle to the *Corinthians*.) that to keep far enough off from doing any thing *unlawfull*, he was to *abstain*

from many things which were *lawfull* too. Nor does he content himself here to say, Abstain from all *Habits* and *Acts* of Evil, but from all *Appearance* of it. And so I am fain upon the means whereby our *Abstinence* may be completed, the last *Particular* in the Division.

Ἀπέχεσθαι ἀπὸ τῆς εἰδούς, &c.

Abstain from all *Appearance* of Evil.

§ 15. And to the end that we may do so, in every *sense* and *acception* the word will bear, let the *Caveat* be extended to these two *Heads*. First of all to those things, which, though *not evil* in themselves, yet to *others*, or to *us*, do appear to be so; Next to things, which, though *not sinfull*, (no not so much as in *appearance*;) do put upon us a kind of *Bias*, and *Propensity* to Sin. To the *former* I shall refer, whatsoever Things are *lawfull*, but yet *uncomly*, or *inexpedient*. I shall refer unto the *later*, whatsoever Things are *lawfull*, but of *dangerous consequence*; not *formally* evil, but grossly evil in the effect.

§ 16. And first *abstain* from those things, which if not *evil* in themselves, yet to *others*, or to *us*, do appear to be so; and by consequence though they are *lawfull*, consider'd simply in their *Natures*, yet in certain *conjunctures* they cannot *lawfully* be done. As (for example) it

is *\*lawfull to eat of things*, which either are or have been *offer'd in Sacrifice unto Idols*; which yet we *\*cannot eat lawfully*, if in the *Presence* of a *Brother* who hath either a *condemning* or *doubting* Conscience. We must *beware that this our Liberty become not a Stumbling-block to them that are weak*. And therefore *He that had knowledge* (in the *Times of the Apostle*,) was not in reason to *sit at meat in the Idol's Temple*, for fear that *he who had none should be imboldned to eat of things offer'd unto Idols*, even against his over weak and erroneous Conscience. So that although *not to abstain for another man's sake*, when we *need not for our own*, cannot be said to be a Sin through any *unlawfulness* in the *Object indulged to*; yet 'tis a Breach of that *Rule* which was set by *S. Paul* for all to walk by, *That no man put a Stumbling-block, or an occasion to fall, in his brother's way*. Rom. 14. 13. (Which Rule cannot extend to those things *Indifferent*, which being such but *antecedently*, are *consequentially Necessary*, in as much as they are under the *Obligation of a Command*, and a *Command* from That *Authority* which God has *commanded* us to obey. And this Parenthesis being premis'd for the preventing of Mistakes, I proceed to give an Instance of the Case but

\* 1 Cor. 8. 4.  
8.

1 Ver. 9.

Ver. 10.

now mention'd. For) Thus the *Liberty* to fly, for the *escaping* of a *shamefull and painfull Death*, though very *lawfull* as to its *nature*, may be *unlawfull*, as to its *use*; in regard of many *Circumstances* wherewith the Case may be *apparel'd*. For first (however it is *lawfull*,) it may be highly *inexpedient*, as to the *scandal* it may give to our *weaker Brethren*; (concerning which I have spoken enough already;) And next, (however it is *lawfull*,) it may be *scandalously indecent*, as to the *Gravity* of a man's *Age*, and the *Dignity* of his *Calling*. In each of which cases, That which is *lawfull* in *itself*, is notwithstanding *not allowable* in the *Circumstances* propos'd; because inconsistent with *two* main *Virtues*; to wit, with *Charity* in the *first* Instance, and with *Prudence* in the *second*. An *Example* we have of *Both* in the renowned *Eleazer*, (*2 Macc. 6.*) Who being sentenced to the *Torments* for refusing to eat of *unlawfull Meats*, would not *basely* save his life, no not by eating *such Meat* as was *lawfull* for him. And for this his *Resolution* he gave *two reasons*. First, he argued from the *Indecency*, and again from the *Danger* of it. 'Twould be *indecent* to *Himself*, and as *dangerous* to *others*; who straight would follow his

Copiosius hac  
Narratio ha-  
benda est a-  
pud Iose-  
phum, in  
Libello cui  
Titulus, οὐ  
δυνάμεθα  
ἀποστρέφειν



his Example, as well of *Cowardize*, as of *Courage*, by whichsoever of the two he should chance to *lead* them. First, he would not bring *flesh of his own Provision*, and make as if he did eat of what was commanded by the King, (as his old Friends at Court would fain have had him, v. 21.) because he was told by his *Discretion*, that 'twas not *sutable* to the *honour* of his reverend *Gray-head*; (v. 23.) and He would shew himself *such as his Age required*, (v. 27.) Again, He would not save his Life by such an *appearance* of *Impiety*, as the eating of what was *lawfull* in lieu of what was *unlawfull*, because he was prompted by his *Charity*, not to indanger *many young Persons* their being *betray'd* by that *Artifice*, to think that old *Eleazer*, when he was *Fourscore years and Ten*, had at last gone away to a *strange Religion*. (v. 24, 25. Whereas 'twas very fit for *Him*, who was one of the *Principal of the Scribes*, (v. 18.) to leave a *notable Example* of *Sincerity* and *Courage*, and of *Daringness* to die for the *Laws of God*. (v. 28. and 31. Thus there are very many things, which though *lawfull* to us as *Christians*, are yet *unseemly* for us as *Men*; and do *dishonour* our *Vocation*, even then when they do not *defile* our *Conscience*. For how many *Trades* are there,

2 Macc. 6.  
d v. 18. ad  
v. 31.

very *lawfull* in themselves, which yet by *us* of the *Clergy* cannot *lawfully* be driven? And therefore *Abstinence* from *These* is to be reckon'd as a *Duty*, at least to our *Quality*, and our *Rank*, if not precisely to our *Religion*. Abstain we therefore (as much as may be) from all that carries any *appearance*, or *shew* of *Evil*; And as from all that is *Expedient*, unless it appears to be *lawfull* too; so from all that is *lawfull*, but *not expedient*.

*Sed fugitare  
magis simu-  
lacrâ & pa-  
bula Amoris,  
Atque aliò  
studeat ani-  
mi traducere  
moris. Lu-  
cret. l. 4. de  
Remedio  
Amoris.  
Exod. 20. 17.*

*Mat. 5. 28.*

*2 Pet. 2. 14.*

*Num. 16. 26.*

*Eccles. 13. 1.*

§ 17. Again, Abstain from those things, which though *not* evil in *themselves*, are yet *Incentives*, or *Occasions*, or *Introductories* to evil; and however *not formally*, yet *effectively* such. For as it is not onely said, *Thou shalt not steal*, but over and above *Thou shalt not covet*; so the way *not to covet*, is *not to see*, *not to tast*, *not to touch* such an Object, as is naturally apt to *inchant* the *Senses*. Our *Saviour* tells us of *Adultery* in the *Heart*. And the Apostle *S. Peter*, of *Adultery* in the *Eye*. And *Moses* pressing his Congregation to an effectual *Abstinence* from the *Evil*, which *Corah* and others had newly done, said, *Depart from the Tents of these wicked men, and Touch nothing of theirs*. Depart from all suspected *Persons*, and *Places* too. For *be that toucheth Pitch shall be defiled therewith*.  
And

And \* *he that loves danger shall perish in it. Whatsoever is born of the Flesh is Flesh*; (Joh. 3. 6.) Nor does the *Wax* with more Aptness take an *Impression* from the *Seal*, than the *Flesh* from the *Bait* of an *ill Affection*. Inſomuch that ſome parts of the holy Scripture were ( in the Times of *Caffianus* ) not intruſted to the Ears of the younger Chriſtians, \* *Ne noxia Titillationis ſtimulus excitaretur*. He that hopes to be Safe whiſt he converſeth with *Incentives* to any Sin, is thought by *Solomon* as *Irrational*, as if he ſhould *walk on hot Coals*, and hope his feet will not be burnt; or take fire into his Boſom, in a confidence that it will not conſume his cloths. Prov. 7. 27, 28. Nay <sup>a</sup> *S. Bernard* was of opinion, That to be converſant with a *Woman*, and yet be innocent in converſe, is a *difficulter work than to raiſe the Dead*. And then the *Hebrew Wiſe men* could not be *righteous over-much*, when they prohibited all diſcourſe betwixt *Man and Woman*, ( excepting onely That of an *Husband* with a *Wiſe*, ) both in regard of the *Scandal*, and *Danger* of it; the poſſible ſcandal unto others, and actual Danger unto *Theirſelves*.

§ 18. How very nearly it does concern even the graveſt, and the moſt ſafe, to abſtain from  
all

\* Ch. 3. v. 26.

\* Caffian.  
lib. 19. Col-  
lat. §. 16.

a Cum ſemi-  
nā ſemper  
eſſe, & non  
cognoſcere  
ſeminam,  
nonne plus  
eſt quā  
mortuum ſuſ-  
citare? Quod  
minus eſt non  
potes, & quā  
majus eſt viſ  
credam tibi?  
D. Bernard.  
Super Canti-  
ca Serm. 65.  
p. 760.

\* Nec res est  
dubia quam  
narro: quia  
penè tantis in  
eâ testes sunt,  
quanti ejus-  
dem loci Ha-  
bitatores.

Quandam  
Sanctimoniam  
secum  
permisit habi-  
tare, certius de  
sua ejusque con-  
tinentia, An-  
dreas Funda-  
ne Civitatis  
Episcopus  
Mox de suo  
habituaculo  
non solum e-  
andem Dei  
Famulam, sed  
omnem quo-  
que feminam  
illinc expulit.

Greg. Mag.  
Dialog. l. 3.  
c. 7. fol. 29.  
a Laur. Su-  
rius T. 1.

Die 13. Febr.  
— Misit An-  
gelos Deus  
ad Tutelam  
cultumque  
Generis Hu-  
mani. — Illos  
cum homini-  
bus commu-  
nantes Diabo-  
lus paulatim  
ad vitia pel-

lexit, & mulierum congressibus inquinavit. Tum in Cælum ob Peccata non recepti ceciderunt in Ter-  
ram. Sic eos Diabolus διαμυνάμενος ex Angelis Dei, suos fecit satellites ac Ministros. Laëti. l. 2. c. 15.  
p. 65.

Ἡ δὲ ἄγγελοι πνεύματι ἀρετῆς ἡγουμένους, ἐκδημιῶν ἀλόγους, ἡγεγρόμενοι διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν. Clem. Alex. Strom. l. 3. p. 450. Οἱ δὲ ἄγγελοι, παρὰ τὸν πᾶν τὸν πᾶν γινώσκοντες τὰς ἀνθρώπων ψυχὰς, καὶ τὰς ἀνθρώπων ψυχὰς, οἱ δὲ ἀγγελοὶ διακονοῦντες. Just. Mar. Apol. 1. p. 44.

all Occasions and Opportunities of evil, may be collected from the Examples both of \* *Andreas Bishop of Fundo*, and of the exemplary *Martirian*, a famous *Hermit*. Whereof the former was fain to banish an *holy Matron* out of his House, because he found he could not safely enjoy her sight, nor be protected by her Innocence, from the great Hazard of his own. The <sup>a</sup> *Later* finding he could not otherwise be exempted from the *Occasions* and *Baits* of Sin, threw Himself first into the *Fire*, for the refining of his Desires; and after That into the *Water*, whereby to drown them. Nay as if the *holy Angels* were not fit to be intrusted with such Temptations, not onely *Philo* and *Josephus*, but divers *Fathers of the Church*, (*Justin Martyr*, *Tertullian*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and *Laëtantius*,) have understood by the *Sons of God* who could not innocently gaze upon the *Daughters of men*, (*Gen. 6. 2.*) Not the *Potentates* of the *Earth*, but even the *Angels of Heaven*. Now though I think with *Theodoret*, and most of the ancient Commentators, that the *Fathers* were in an *Errour* who so expounded;

yet it assures us of their *Opinion*, how much *Temptations* are to be *shun'd*, and how carefully we should *fly* the *Occasions* of them. *Igni cum Fæno non bene convenit*, said *Martinian* to a *Beauty* whom he had *pull'd* out of the *Sea*, but would not *trust* himself with when she came to *Land*. But more remarkable were the words of the pious *Presbyter* \**Ursinus*, when a good *Woman* came to help him as he was giving up the *Ghost*, (one whom he *lov'd* too as a *Sister*, but yet *avoided* as an *Enemy*,) *Recede à me Mulier, adhuc vivit Igniculus, Paleam tolle*. As if he fear'd that That *Stricture* or *Spark* of life remaining in him, might have grown into a *Flame* at the *sight* of *Chaff*.

§ 19. Now since it cannot but be *inferred* from the whole *Tenor* of my *Discourse*, That the way to become *able to abstain from all evil*, is to abstain from all *approach* and *appearance* of it, from all that does *lead* and *allure* us to it, from all that has a *Tendency* and *Byass* towards it; Nothing remains but that we *labour*, in every Instance of *Temptation* and *Ghostly danger*, (if we are willing to use the *means* whereby our *Abstinence* may be completed,) to *frustrate* the *Malice* of the *Devil*, to *baffle* the *Arguments* of the *Flesh*, and to *tread* under our feet an

M m

insulcing

\* Ex tempore Ordinationis acceptæ Presbyteram suam ut sororem diligens, sed quasi Hostem cavens, ad se propius accedere nunquam sinebat. — Et ab eâ sibi communionem funditus Familiaritatis absciderat. Gr. Greg. Mag. Dial. l. 4. c. 11. fol. 37.

insulting *World*, even by carrying our selves *wisely* in all our ways, and by keeping constant *watch* over all our Walkings; and that we never suffer our selves, either by *stratagem*, or by *force*, to be *diverted* or *drawn aside* from this *saving Method*, until our well-meant *Indeavours* shall all expire into *perfection*; our *Contendings with the Flesh*, into *Triumphs over it*; our rigid *Abstinences from Evil*, into the ravishing *Injoyments* of all that's *Good*; our *Temporary Lent*, into an *Everlasting Jubile*; our short *Self-denials*, into the *Pleasures of Æternity*; our *Days of Mourning and Mortification*, into endless *Fruitions of Bliss and Glory*.

Which thou, O God, of thy Mercy vouchsafe unto us, for the Glory of thy Name, and for the Worthiness of thy Son; To whom, with thee, O Father, in the Unity of the Spirit, be all Honour and Glory both now and forever. *Amen.*



OF  
 ABSTAINING  
 IN  
 GENERAL  
 FROM  
 Fleshly Lusts.

I PET. 2. 11.

*Dearly Beloved, I beseech you, as Strangers, and Pilgrims, abstain from fleshly Lusts, which war against your Soul. Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles, that whereas they speak against you as evil Doers, they may by your good works which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of Visitation.*

§ 1. **S**aint Peter, as a good Builder, (a Spiritual Workman who needed not to be ashamed,) having prudently laid the first Foundation

*dation* of his Discourse in the former Chapter, to wit, the *Holy Spirit of God efficaciously working by his word*; And having erected thereupon the three grand *Pillars of Christianity, Faith, Hope, and Charity*; does straight proceed in this Chapter to superstruct on those Pillars by way of general Exhortation. Which though particularly directed unto the *Christians* of the *Dispersion* in several Provinces of *Asia*, yet 'twas equally intended, and is as applicable to *Us* too, on whom *the ends of the World are come*. Now his general Exhortation is briefly This. First of all, that we lay aside all kind of *Malice*, and *Hypocrisie*, and the *malignity of the Tongue*. (v. 1.) Secondly, That as Infants do suck the nourishment of their Bodies from the *same Mother's Breast* from whom they had newly receiv'd their *Being*; so also *We*, being regenerate by the good word of *God*, and thereby reputed as *new-born Babes*, should from the *same word of God*, suck out a *nourishment* for our Souls, and thereby grow unto *perfection*. (v. 2.) This word as he calls by the name of *milk*, so he commends it to our *Palats*, as *sweet*, and *wholesom*, (v. 3.) After which he goes on with his *Exhortation*, but steps aside from his *Metaphor*, and addresth himself to a *new scheme of Rhetorick*.

torick. Calling *Christ* a *Living-Stone*, (v.4.) and the *Members of Christ* a *Spiritual House*, (v.5.) and proving *Both* out of *Esa*, (v.6.) Next he shews the *opposition* betwixt the *Obedient*, and the *Rebellious*; representing *Jesus Christ* as a *support* unto the *former*, but to the *later* a *Stone of stumbling*, and a *Rock of offence*. (v.7,8.) Then, having said how God had taken us from out the men of *this world*, and made us a *chosen generation*, a *royal Priesthood*, an *holy Nation*, a *peculiar People*, a *People called out of darkness*, into his *marvellous light*, (v.9,10.) He here proceeds to exhort us, with somewhat a greater degree of warmth, that we behave our selves *suitably* to our *Vocation*.

*Dearly beloved, I beseech you, as Strangers, and Pilgrims, abstain, &c.*

§ 2. A very pertinent Exhortation to all the Duties of the *Lent*; to *Christian Purity*, and *Strictness*, and to *Abstinence* from *Enormities* of every kind. *Abstain from Fleshly Lusts*, that is, (as *S. Paul* does explain *S. Peter*,) from *Rioting* and *Drunkenness*, from *Chambering* and *Wantonness*, from *Strife* and *Envy*, from *Malcontentedness* and *Sedition*, from *Revengefulness* and *Rebellion*, from *Schism* and *Hæresie*. For that These are all equally the *Lusts of the*

*Flesh*, or the *Fleshly Lusts*, I shall necessarily shew in the proper Places of my Discourse. The Exhortation (taken in gross) does consist of two Parts. The *material* part of it is express'd in these words, [ *Abstain from Fleshly Lusts, and have your Conversation honest,* ] The *formal* part of it in these, [ *Dearly beloved, I beseech you.* ] Thus we see the *Exhortation* is usher'd in with an *Intreaty*, and This with such a *Compellation*, as shews an *Earnestness* of *Affection* in him that speaks. His *Exhortation* is so important, so *perswasive* his *Intreaty*, and so *meltingly obliging* his *Compellation*, that hardly any thing can be added to give an *energy* or *weight* to S. *Peter's* Preaching. Though he desires no more of them, than to have *mercy* upon *themselves*, yet he begs for it as *heartily*, as if he were *begging* for his *Life*. *Dearly beloved, I beseech you, I come unto you as a Petitioner*, that ye will not be so transported out of your *Interest* and your *Wits*, as madly to *ruin your selves* for ever. I make it my *humble Supplication*, that ye will rather *live happy* to all *Eternity*. If there is any thing in the World with which you are willing to oblige me, do not wilfully *run* upon *Swords* and *Halberts*; Seek not to *dwell* with *devouring Fire*; Be not so foolish as to catch at

everlasting Burnings; But be of an honest Conversation, and abstain from *Fleshly Lusts* which war against the Soul.

Thus *S. Peter's Exhortation* is very Affectionate and Earnest. And taking our selves to be the Persons to whom the Exhortative does belong, We have it inforced upon our hearts by *Five* strong Arguments or Motives. All the worthier of our Attention, because arising out of the Text.

The First Argument is taken from the Condition of the *Persons*, to whom the earnest Exhortation is here directed. We are *Citizens* of Heaven, and but *Strangers* upon Earth, and therefore we must live as *becometh Strangers*. Nor are we *Strangers* onely, but *Pilgrims*. Not onely *παροικοι*, out of our own Country, but withall *παραποδῖμοι*, that is, *Travellers* in a strange one. For this I take to be the difference between these Two, *παροικοι*, *Strangers*, and *παραποδῖμοι*, *Pilgrims*, That though they are Both out of their Country, yet the former have an *Abode*, but the later none. Those have some kind of *Rest*, but These are always in a *Journey*. Those inhabit a foreign Country, whilst These are onely *passing through it*. And seeing this is our Condition, that we relate to this World, not as *Strangers* onely, but *Passengers*,

gers, Men whose Houses are but as Inns, and whose Life is but a Pilgrimage, it concerns us to walk as becometh Pilgrims; that is, to manage our Conversation with so much wariness and fear, as not to lie open to just Reproof.

The Second Argument is taken from the Quality of the Things, in opposition to which our Apostle's Exhortation is here contriv'd. These are σαρκικαὶ ἐπιθυμίαι, such *Fleshy Lusts*, as are very pleasant *Flatterers*, but no true *Friends*. For though they are fawning upon the *Flesh*, yet they are not at all the less, but the greater *Enemies* to the *Spirit*. And how desirable soever they may appear unto the *Body*, yet σεξτάω κατὰ τὴν ψυχὴν, they are implacably, though invisibly, ever warring against the *Soul*.

The Third Argument is taken from the Consideration of our Credit, with the *Enemies* of *Christ* amongst whom we live. Our Conversation is to be honest, ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, among the *Gentiles*. And that for this reason, ἵνα μὴ καταλαλώμεν, That however they do maliciously, they may not deservedly speak against us. Whereas in case we live dishonestly, and indulgently to our Lusts, we shall help them to excuse, if not to justify their Malignties against our Persons, and our Profession: And they will have a just



a *just ground* whereupon to *defame* us as *Evil-Doers.*

The Fourth Argument is taken from the Consideration of our *Enemies Welfare* ; To wit, their *present Conversion*, and *future Safety*. In whose sight if we converse as becometh *Christ's Servants*, by our *abstaining from Fleshly Lusts*, and *having an honest Conversation*, ἐποφίλιον faith the Text, *They then will look upon us with reverence*, and judge of our *Principles* by our *good Works*. We shall not onely *stop* their *Mouths*, but *weaken* the *violence* of their *Hands*, and help to *mollifie* their *Hearts*, and become happily *instrumental* to the *salvation* of their *Souls*.

The Fifth Argument is taken from the *Glory of God* and its great *Advancement*. We must endeavour so to live, as to *adorn the Doctrine of Jesus Christ*. Our Conversation must be such, as *becomes* the Gospel. Our way of *Walking* must be *exemplary*, and our *Behaviour* must be *exact*, that *Christ's Religion* being credited, his *Kingdom* also may be *enlarged*, whilst by the *Alleeive* of our *Example* men will be won from *their corruptions*, and shew forth the Praises of our God, *who hath called us out of darknes into his marvellous light*. And this, as 'tis the *last*,

so 'tis the *best* and *chiefest* Argument for our punctual abstaining from *Fleshly Lusts*, and *having an honest Conversation*, *ὡς δόξαν τῷ Θεῷ*, That *Men* (by seeing our good works) may not glorifie *Us*, but *δοξαν τῷ Θεῷ*, may glorifie *God in the Day of Visitation*.

§ 3. These are all *S. Peter's* Arguments. Nor have I stept either *beyond* or beside the Text for the finding of them. And for the pressing of the Duty He here enjoyns, never were there more or better Arguments in the world, by any Pen-man contriv'd into fewer Words. Before I insist upon any Argument whereby to *inforce* the Exhortation, I must first of all explain the *Exhortation it self*, First observing the importance of *Fleshly Lusts*, and then what is meant by *abstaining* from them.

In order to the First, two Things are to be known. How we ought to understand the *moral* use of the word *Flesh*, (especially as it is taken in Several parts of the New Testament,) and what is meant by the *Lustings* of it.

By the word *Flesh* in the New Testament is very commonly meant the *Appetite*. This is the seat of our *Affections*, the subject matter of *Vice* and *Virtue*. Our *Affections* are ever conversant in *pursuing*, or *eschewing*, in *injoying*,  
or

or in *suffering* their several Objects. Their *Objects* in the general are *Good*, or *Evil*. And *both* are consider'd in *Themselves*, or in *relation* to the *Circumstances* wherewith they happen to be *cloath'd*. *Good* consider'd *in it self* is at once both the *Object* and *Cause* of *Love*. But in relation to its *Circumstances*, it is productive of *other Passions*. For, if *present*, it causeth *Joy*; and if *absent*, it breeds *Desire*. Again, the *Good* which is *Absent* is either *attainable*, or it is *not*. If the *former*, it causeth *Hope*; and if the *later*, it breeds *Despair*. In like manner an *evil Object* is to be taken in its *absolute*, or in its *relative* Consideration. In the *former* 'tis productive of simple *Hatred*; but in the *later* it produceth either *Sorrow*, or *Aversation*. The *First*, if it is *present*; and if *absent*, then the *Second*. Again, the *evil* that is *absent* is either *avoidable*, or it is *not*. If the *former*, it causeth *Boldness*: but if the *later*, it causeth *Fear*. Thus we briefly see the *Rivulets* of all our *Passions*, or *Affections*, together with the *Fountain* from whence they *flow*. Now so many of our *Affections* as are reducible to *Desire*, may be called not improperly our several *Lusts*. Things so *necessary*, and *natural*, and *indifferent* in *themselves*, that being *abstractively*, and

precisely, and antecedently consider'd, they are equally in an aptitude of becoming both the matter of *Vice*, and *Virtue*. But when *extravagant*, as to the *Object*, or *exorbitant*, as to the *Measure*; Then they are, and are justly call'd, either the *Lusts of the Flesh*, or the *Fleshly Lusts*.

§ 4. Now 'tis observable in the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament, that *Lust* is many times Synonymous both with *Avarice*, and *Desire*. The Greek *ἐπιθυμία*, and the Latin *concupiscere*, does equally Signifie them all. And thence it is that *all Three* have been \* promiscuously us'd in our *English Bibles*. For there we meet as well with *lawfull*, as with *unlawfull Lusts*; and as well with a *good*, as an *evil Avarice*; (and with *Both* as they are taken in the innocent sense of our *Desires*;) Nay, there we meet with such a *Lustling*, as is not only *lawfull*, but also *eminently good*. We have an Example of the *first*, Deut. 12. 15. *Thou mayest kill and eat Flesh in all thy Gates, whatsoever thy Soul lusteth after*; that is, whatever it *desireth*, or hath an *Appetite unto*. We have an Instance of the *second*, in the First Epistle to the *Corinthians*; where though 'tis said, that *no Covetous shall ever inherit the Kingdom of God*, yet

\* See Deut.  
14. 26. com-  
pared with  
Deut. 12. 15,  
20, 21.

1 Cor. 6. 10.

yet there are things which we must *Covet*, and *Covet earnestly*, saith the Apostle, *1 Cor. 12. 31.* We have a Specimen of the *Third* too, *Gal. 5. 17.* Whereas the *Flesh lusteth against the Spirit, so doth the Spirit against the Flesh.* And this does shew us what is meant by the *Law in the Members*, and the *Law in the Mind*, which are said to be *warring*, that is, to be *Lustling* against each other, *Rom. 7. 23.* the last of which is as good, as the first is evil.

*1 Cor. 14. 39.*

§ 5. But here we must not impose that obvious Fallacy on our selves, which is, *à bene divisis ad malè conjuncta.* For though the *Flesh*, and the *Lusts*, being in *Sensu diviso*, have both their *innocent Significations*, yet in *Sensu composito*, they ever signifie what is *sinfull.* Nor onely the *Breaches* of any one, but of *several Precepts* in the Decalogue. For in the Epistle to the *Galatians*, not *Adultery* onely, but *Murthers*, not *Fornication* onely, but *Witchcraft*, *Idolatry*, *Seditions*, *Heresies*, are reckon'd up by *S. Paul* amongst the *works of the Flesh*, and that in perfect opposition to the *Fruits of the Spirit.* Nor is it onely said (in the last Precept of the Decalogue,) *Thou shalt not covet thy Neighbour's Wife*, But *not his House*, *not his Servant*, *not his Oxe*, *not his Ass*, no nor

any thing else that is thy Neighbours. So that all evil Covetings are *Fleshly Lusts*, in respect of the *Principle* from which they come, though not always of the *Object* towards which they tend. Though in regard unto the *later*, they are not all Lustings *after* the *Flesh*, yet in regard unto the *former*, they all are Lustings of the *Flesh*, or σαρκικαί επιθυμια, *Fleshly Lusts*. 'Twas such a Lust of *Curosty*, joyn'd with another of *Ambition*, which made *Eve* eat of *forbidden fruit*. 'Twas such a *Fleshly Lust* of *Envy*, which made *Cain* murder his Brother *Abel*. 'Twas such a *Fleshly Lust* of *Avarice*, which made an *Achan* lay hold of the *golden Wedge*. Nor was it less a *Fleshly Lust* which moved *Abolon* to compass his Father's *Kingdom*, than That by which he defiled his Father's *Concubines*.

§ 6. Now from all these *Fleshly Lusts* we are exhorted to *abstain*, as may appear by their *Antithesis* to such a Christian *Conversation*, as is not onely to be *chast*, but universally *honest* among the *Gentiles*. And yet from those in special manner are we exhorted to *abstain*, which are peculiarly compriz'd in the *seventh Precept* of the *Decalogue*, and are expressed by the name of *lascivious Lusts*, 1 Pet. 4. 3.

For



For those were chiefly the *Fleshly Lusts* of the *Gnosticks*, from whose unclean courtie of life the *Jewish Christians* of the *Dispersion* were here *deported*. And so they signifie with *S. John* when he reduces all the Army of our Spiritua*l* *Warriers* to *Three Brigades*, and makes an eminent Distinction of the *Lust of the Flesh*, both from the *Lust of the Eye*, and the *Pride of Life*.

1 Joh. 2. 16.  
Gal. 5. 16.  
Eph. 2. 3.

§ 7. But what kind of *Abstinence* is here intended? not such a complete and *total Abstinence*, as is from all kinds of *Lusting* without exception. For This may seem as vain a Task, as to *Abstain* from being *Men*; since 'tis evident from the *Confessions* both of *Saxony*, and *Helvetia*, as also from the 9th. of our 39 *Articles*, That *Concupiscence remains in the most regenerate*. To which implicit Objection, I answer Thus. That though the *Precept* for *abstaining* does refer both to the *Obj. & Act* of *Lusting*, yet it is with this Difference, that we must *totally* abstain from the *things Lusted after*, and *as much as in us lies* from the *Lust it self*. For if we cannot *prevent* a Lust from ever entring into the *heart*, yet we *can* and *must* keep it from breaking forth into our *Actions*, and from the *Presence* of the *Temptation* which

which leads to *Both*. Many pretend to Disabilities to which they have not a *real Title*. It clearly lies in our power, to make a *Covenant* with our *Eyes*; to set a *Watch* over our *Ears*; to keep the *Door* of our *Lips*; to thrust *Impediments* in the way betwixt Us and Danger; and by the help of God's Grace, (which is not wanting unto any who are not wanting unto It,) it also lies in our Power to keep a *Guard* about our *Hearts*; to put a *Bridle* upon our *Wills*; and give a check to the *Cariere* of wild Affections. So that if I may paraphrase S. Peter's Exhortation, it will in the whole amount to This: Dearly beloved, I beseech you, as arrant Foreigners and Exoticks on this side Heaven, that ye religiously *abstain* from *forbidden Objects* in the general, and especially from Those which are *most Treacherous* to the *Flesh*. Give not any *satisfaction* to carnal motions, and be not any whit *indulgent* to loose Desires. *Make no provision for the Flesh, to fulfill the Lusts thereof*. But keep it rather from *Incentives*, and try to *starve* it. As it *wars* against you, so do you against it. Besiege it *closely* on every side; *Block up* all its *Avenues*; *Intercept* its *Provisions* by *Prayer* and *Fasting*. Reduce the *Flesh* to such an *Exigence* for want of *Vic-*  
tuals

Rom. 13. 14.

Gal. 5. 16.

*tuals* and *Ammunition*, as may effectually *compel* it to make a *Surrender* unto the *Spirit*. Put your selves with Resolution into a *moral Impossibility* of being worsted. And in order thereunto, Abstain not onely from the *Food* of your *Fleshly Lusts*, but withall from the *Borders* and *Confines* of it; not onely from the *All* that may *cause* uncleanness, but from all that may *occasion* the things that cause it.

§ 8. For here 'tis worthy our observation, (in the management of our *warfare* against those *Enemies*, which do often the more *successfully*, because *invisibly* war against us,) That we are *otherwise* to encounter with the Temptations of the *Iracible*, than with the *other* more *insnaring* ones of the *concupiscible* Faculty. The onely way to quell the *first*, is indeed by *Fighting*, but the way to beat the *second*, must be by *Flight*. The way to vanquish those *Allurements* of *Flesh and Blood*, which are vulgarly express'd by the name of *Beauties*, is not boldly to *contend with*, but rather prudently to *abstain* from the *Presence* of them. We commonly reckon that a *Garrison* is little less than *half taken*, when it admits of any *parley* with its *Besiegers*. To enter into a *Treaty*, is the Beginning of a *Surrender*; and then with a greater

force of reason. He that approaches so very near, as to *wrestle* with the Temptations He ought to *fly*, and entertains so much commerce, as to *combat* with them, is like a very *stout Champion* who falls to *grapple* with a man that is *arm'd* with *Sickness*; I mean the *Leprosie*, or the *Plague*, or other *diseases* of *Infection*. Because notwithstanding he *throws* the man far enough, it will be hard to clear himself from all *contagion* of his *Disease*. Many are led into Captivity to the Law of Sin, by not distinguishing as they ought, (and as holy men of old were wont to do,) betwixt Temptations and Temptations of several sorts; I mean the Temptations they ought to *fight with*, and the Temptations they ought to *fly*. To make it profitable and plain, I will illustrate what I say, by one or two Scriptural Examples.

Job 1. 20.

§ 9. When nothing but the *Patience* of Job was tempted, by the *loss* of his *Estate*, and the *destruction* of his *Children*, *Tunc surrexit*, saith the Text, *Then Job arose*, rouz'd up himself like a sturdy Lion; and as it were *girded himself with strength*. He was so far from *drawing back* from the face of Danger, that he *arose*, and *stood to it*, and bravely *baff'd* both the *wit* and the *strength* of Satan. But when the same  
Job

*Job* was tempted by the *Allurements of the Flesh*, Then he manifested his *valour*, (like *Fabius Maximus*, or the *Parthians*,) by taking the Courage to use his *Prudence*. And he manifested his *Prudence*, by the *timeliness* of his *Flight*. He made a *Covenant with his Eyes*, not to look upon an Object which might indanger him by *Delight*. It was then his chief *Wisdom*, when (not his *Constancy*, or his *Patience*, but) his *Chastity* was concern'd, not to make trial of his *Mastery*, in *containing* from a pleasant forbidden Object, but rather wholly to *abstain* from the *Presence* of it. The different way of incountring the different sorts of Temptation, may be collected from the difference, wherewith the *Scripture* doth direct us to deal with the *Devil*, and the *Flesh*. *Resist the Devil*, is the Precept of *S. James*; but *fly Fornication*, is the Caveat of *S. Paul*. For other *Vices* (saith *Anselm* upon that Caveat to the *Corinthians*) are easily conquerable by *Conflict*, whereas This of *Fornication* is onely conquerable by *Flight*. Now to *fly Fornication*, is not onely to be *continent*, (which implies a kind of *Combat*, though 'tis not follow'd with *consent*; a being somewhat affected, although not *drawn*;) but 'tis *totally* to *abstain* from all commerce with the Tempta-

*Job.* 31. 1.

Nunquam fugatur, nisi cum fugitur, nunquam maceratur, nisi cum maceratur, &c. *Esperatus de Coniug.* l. 6. c. 11. d. p. 896. ad p. 903.

*Jam.* 4. 7.  
1 *Cor.* 6. 18.  
Cum aliis vitiiis potest expellari conflictus; hac autem fugienda est, quia aliter vinci non potest.  
*Anselmus in* 1 *Cor.* 6. 18.  
—Καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ ἡ δὴ πνεῦμα καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ.  
*Aristot. Eth.* l. 7. c. 9.

Cetera vitia  
vincuntur re-  
sistendo, sed  
Fornicatio  
fugiendo. i.e.  
totaliter vi-  
tando cogi-  
tationes im-  
mundas, &  
quoslibet oc-  
casiones.  
Aquinas in  
1 Cor. 6. 18.  
in eundem  
sensum Ca-  
jetanus ibid.  
v. Cassian.  
Collat. l. 19.  
§. 16.  
Puella vel  
Christo refer-  
vate amore  
capius est,  
& saucius  
Magnus ille  
Cyprianus.  
Unde? &  
quomodo?  
tangunt ocu-  
lorum faces  
etiam intan-  
gibilia. Nec  
solum capius  
est, sed & sol-  
licitavit—  
Liberanda de  
locis pericu-  
lofis Navis,  
ne inter Sec-  
pulos franga-  
tur. Evuenda  
velociter de  
incendio Sar-  
cina, prius-  
quam flammam  
superven-  
ientibus con-  
cremetur. Nemo diutius, Periculo Proximus. Esq. c. s. ubi supra pag. 900.

tion. 'Tis to *defeat* it in such a manner, as King *Edward the Sixth*, and the most excellent Bishop *Wainfleet* are said by *Budden* to have *defeated* the *Armed Rebels* under *Jack Cade*, *vel non pugnando*; by *not fighting* with them at all, but onely by *praying* against their Wickedness. The *total abstinence* I speak of, is not onely from the *Objects* of *Fleahly Lust*, but from the *Vicini- ties*, and the *occasions*, yea from all the very *memo- ries* and *mentions* of them. For so *Aquinas* and *Cajetan* do expound *S. Paul's* Caveat, 1 Cor. 6. 18.

§ 10. It follows then that we are likelier to be secure from *such dangers* by *timely flight*, than to beat them quite down by a *stout Resistance*. And though the *later* must be imploy'd when we are actually *ingag'd*, yet to *anticipate* such *ingagements*, it will be our best method to use the *former*. For how much safer 'tis to *fly*, than to *incounter* such *Allurements*, (though *incounter* them we *must*, when we *cannot* fly them,) we may illustrate by the *exam- ples* of *Joseph*, and *Sampson*, who were as *va- rious* in their *Behaviours*, as they were *diffe- rent* in their *Success*. *Joseph* fled from his *Mistris* by whom he was tempted *day by day*. He was so far from *discursing* about the matter in de-



sign, as that *he would not be with her*, but sprang from her presence, and *got him out.* Gen.39.10.

12. Whereas *Samson* (on the contrary) was no sooner come to *Gaza*, than *he saw there an Harlot*; nor did he onely *See* but *he went unto her.* (Judg.16.1.) Again, no sooner was he come to the Valley of *Soreck*, where he adventur'd to converse with another *Woman*, (v.4.) but one of the next Things we read of, is *His telling her all his heart.* (v.17.) And the very next to That, is *His sleeping upon her knees.*

(v.19) And the consequent of This, *the loss of his Liberty, and his Eyes.* (v.21.) It was not then without reason, That so great and good a Prophet as the Prophet *Elijah*, who had so bravely *\* withstood King Abab*, did quickly after *fly away* from the Face of *Jezebel*. And that *Abimelech* should have *fled* at the sight of *Sarah*, is very evident even from hence, That no sooner had he *taken* her, than he was fain to *put her away.* (Gen.20.3.7.) Nor did he *part* onely with *Her*, but with *a thousand pieces of Silver*, (v.16.) And that in *velamen Oculorum*, for a *Covering of the Eyes*. And that not onely unto *Her*, but to all that hereafter should *look upon* her, as *Gerundensis*, and *Hamerus* explain the Text. Or (in the *Gloss* of *Tertul-*

\* 1 King.18.  
18.  
a Chap. 19.  
v.3.

V. Munsterum in Locum & Cornelium & La-  
pide.

lian,) for the buying of veils enough, wherewith to cover both her *own* and her *Maiden's* Beauty; and this to the end they might not easily either *See*, or be *Seen* by the other Sex.

§ 11. But I have largely enough explain'd the *moral use* of the word *Flesh*, and what is meant by the *Lustings* of it, and what it is to *Abstain* from all These, as well according to the *Object* as *Act* of Lusting, and as well in a *divided* as *compound* Sense. Besides that in so spacious a Field of matter, and so fruitfull of meditation, as That I am entring now upon, there will be need of some Care that none be *surfeited* even with *Abstinence*. For though an *Abstinence* (not from *Flesh*, but) from *Flethly* Lusts, is both the *Best*, and the most *wholesom*, and the most *suitable* to the *Season* in its *primitive Use*, and (where the Guests are all *Christian*) the most *desirable* Entertainment to be imagin'd, yet a *Satiety* of the *best* things is apt to become the *worst* *Satiety* in the world. And therefore rather than exceed the Time allow'd for This Service, I will *begin* and *end* too with That *one* Argument, or Motive, which here is taken from the *Nature*, and perpetual *Employment* of *Flethly* Lusts; which are not onely *no Friends*, but most *Implacable Enemies*;

nor only Enemies to our *temporal*, but *eternal* Interest.

§ 12. It is not only here said, ἐν μάχῃ, *that they fight*, which may imply nothing more than a *Single Battle*; but σεξτάλῳ, *they war*, which imports a continued *State of fighting*. So far from being capable of a firm and solid *Peace*, that they allow us not a *Truce*, or time to *breath in*. Nor do they terminate their malice upon the *Body*, (for then we needed no more to fear them than Armed Enemies from *without*,) but (which is nearer and dearer to us) σεξτάλῳ κατὰ τὸ ψυχῆς, they ever war *against the Soul* too.

§ 13. Thus the *life* of a Christian, as 'tis a *Pilgrimage* of the *Body* from Earth to Earth, (for *Dust thou art, and unto Dust shalt thou return*, said God to *Adam*,) and a *Pilgrimage* of the *Soul* from Heaven to Heaven; (for *the Spirit shall return to God that gave it*, saith the *Royal Ecclesiastes*;) so as truly is it a *warfare* of Soul and Body in conjunction, whereof *That* fights for *Heaven*, and *This* for *Hell*; The former under *God's* Banner, and the later under the *Devil's*. The *Flesh*, and the *Spirit* are so unequally *match'd*, that however nearly *wedded*, they are incessantly *falling out*. Each may  
say

*Militia est  
vita hominis  
super Ter-  
ram. Job 7.1.*

Rom. 7. 23.

\* Gal. 5. 17.

\* 2 Sam. 3.  
27.

say unto the other, *nec possum vivere cum te, nec sine te.* For however unwilling they are to part, they are seldom or never at Agreement. There is a Law in the members so continually warring against the Law of the mind, that the *Flesh* still lusteth against the *Spirit*, and the *Spirit* against the *Flesh*. And these are \*contrary the one to the other. Now 'tis the nature still of Contraries, very earnestly to endeavour a mutual overthrow. And they must Both be well beaten, brought down, and refracted, ere they can peaceably *cobabit* under one and the same Roof. Which kind of Peace may be effected betwixt another sort of Contraries, (for Heat and Cold may agree together in a Lukewarmness, white and black in mixt Colours, Day and Night in a Crepusculum, however These two last are but privatively oppos'd;) but in this moral Contrariety 'twixt the *Spirit* and the *Flesh*, it never can be; the reason is, because when the Spirit is most indulgently at Peace with the *Flesh*, the *Flesh* is then the most dangerous and fatal Enemy to the *Spirit*. Exactly such an Enemy, as Joab was to Abner, when he took him aside, and slew him \*peaceably. Or as the very same Joab to Captain Amasa, when he saluted him as a Brother, inquir'd after his health

as a kind *Physician*, offer'd to *kiss* him as a Dear *Friend*, that so he might *civilly* and *sweetly* smite him under the *fifth Rib*. Or as the two *Sons of Rimmon* to *Righteous Ishbosheth*, when making as if they would fetch some *Wheat*, they kill'd him *style* in his own *House*, and quietly resting upon his *Bed*. Or as *Judeth* to *Olofernes*, when she *pleas'd* him into *Destruction*, and maliciously made him in love with her *Conversation*; when she *ravis'd* him with her *Beauty*, that she might *kill* him with the fruit of his *kindness* to her; stole his *Heart* whilst he was *waking*, that whilst he *slept* she might take his *Head* too. And exactly *such* an *Enemy* is the *Flesh* unto the *Spirit*, when the *Spirit* gives *no disturbance*, but dwells in *quietness* with the *Flesh*. For *then* the *Lusts* of the *Flesh* do give the *Spirit* such *wounds* as it *cannot feel*. Wounds indued with such a numming, *Narcotick* Quality, as *hurts* the *Spirit* *without offense*, and by *killing* it very *pleasantly*, sends it *insensibly* to *Hell*. Nor are any whit the *less*, but the more *certainly* destroy'd, for being laid into a *sleep* by an over-great Dose of *Opium*. Hence those πόλεμοι ἄβρατοι, *invisible Wars*, and *indiscernable Insurrections*, from which the ancient Greek Liturgies were wont to pray for a

2 Sam. 20.  
9, 10.

Chap. 4. v. 6.  
11.

Judeth 12.  
14, 16, 18. &  
Ch. 13. 8.

Παύσων πολέμους ἄβρατους τοῦ ἐμὲ πολέμου.

Cessation. For when the *Soul* is so degenerate as even to *doat* upon the *Body*, Then does the *Body* with most advantage *insensibly* war against the *Soul*. The treacherous *Lusts* of the *Flesh*, (like the treacherous Assassins of *Olofernes* and *Isbosheth*,) assault the *Spirit* in its own *House*, and (which is the worst of all Superchery) as they find it fast *asleep* in the *Bed* of *Carnal Security*. Nor is it onely *not awak'd* by the *Blows* they give it, but it rather *sleeps* the *faster* for being *struck*, (just as if it were struck by the Rod of *Hermes*.) That when at last it shall awake, either in This, or *another* World, it may not be to *escape*, but to *see* its Ruin.

Mic. 7.6.

§ 14. So that the *War* I now speak of, is more than *Civil* or *Domestick*. For *there* we war against *others*, but *here*, against our *own selves*. A *Man's Enemies* (saith the Prophet) are those of *his own House*. And indeed the *greatest* Enemies, excepting those of his *own Heart*. This especially being the *Field*, wherein the *Lusts* of the *Flesh* do still *incamp* against the *Spirit*, and give it *Battle*; and strive to bring it into *Captivity* to the *Law of Sin*. And because the *whole Man* does consist of these two, *Flesh* and *Spirit*, *Body* and *Soul*, *matter* and *form*, as essential Parts of his *Composition*, it cannot



cannot but follow that we *our selves* are incessantly warring against *our selves*. To wit, *our selves*, as we are *Animals*, against *our selves*, as we are *Men*. Our selves, as we are *Men*, against our selves, as we are *Christians*. Our selves, as we are *Carnal*, against our selves, as we are *Spiritual*. Again it follows, that we our selves are the *greatest* Enemies to our selves, because we *arm* our vile *Members* against our *Mind*. (For what our English Translation does call the *Instruments*, is in *S. Paul's* own language, the *Armour of unrighteousness*.) And by the help of this Armour, we Arm our base *Appetites* against our *Wills*; and our brutish *Affections* against our *Reasons*. We use our selves as unmercifully, as *Samson's* Enemies did *Him*. We strive to pluck out our inward *Eyes*, and to deliver our selves *bound* to Sin, and Satan. We side with the *old* man against the *new*; Abet the *outward* man in us against the *inward*; are such *Enemies* to our selves, as to *despoil* our selves of *Grace*, whereby (as much as in us lies, and without Repentance,) we make our selves *incapable* of *Bliss* and *Glory*.

§ 15. But when I speak of a *War* between the *Flesh* and the *Spirit*, I do not mean onely the *visible* and *groß* Body of *Flesh*, which of it self

\*Οὐρα ἀν-  
δραστή.  
Rom. 6. 13.

is but *passive*, and *cannot fight*. No 'tis the *animated* Flesh, the Flesh that is capable of *Lusting*; It is a fleshliness of *Spirit*, and a carnality of *Reason*, which is *arm'd* with a *Wisdom* fetch'd up from *Hell*, and stands in hostile opposition to that which cometh down from *Heaven*, *Jam. 3. 14, 15, 16*. And accordingly when God had upbraided *Israel*, with their being a *foolish and sottish* People, and *void of all understanding*, he gave the reason of it in this, *That they were wise to do evil. (Jer. 4. 22.)* Observe the pithy Brevity of That Expression, *Because they were Wise, they were therefore Foolish*. Their *Wisdom* did not onely *consist with* Folly, but in That *sort of Wisdom* their Folly and Sottishness did *consist*. This is that *Wisdom of the Flesh, which exalteth it self against the Knowledge of God. 2 Cor. 10. 5*. It is an *Earthy, Sensual, Devilish* wisdom, as God Himself by his Apostle is pleas'd to call it. And 'tis with very great reason he calls it *Devilish*; because the *Lust* of the Flesh, which is its *Wisdom*, is a direct *Devil within us*; as having a faculty to *intice us*, and to *draw us quite away* from fighting under *Christ's Banner*. Therefore 'tis that *Lust* and *Satan* have the very same Character in holy Scripture. *A man is tempted* (saith *S. James*)

S. James) when drawn away of his own Lust and inticed. More than which cannot be said of the Devil himself; who cannot drive us by force into any Sin, but onely draw us by Flattery, or morally drive us by panick Fears. Now the very same Warriour, which sometimes is call'd by the name of *Flesh*, is elsewhere termed the carnal Mind; which is as much as to say, the *fleshly Spirit*. The carnal Mind (saith S. Paul) is enmity against God, for it is not subject to his Law, nor indeed can it be. It is so naturally a Rebel, that it can never be any other, so long as it remaineth a carnal Mind. A very natural thing it is for the Son of the Bond-woman, even in Abraham's own house, to hate and persecute the Son of the free. And even in Abraham's own Person, it was as natural for the *Flesh* to war against the Spirit. Esau kick'd against Jacob, whilst both were yet in their Mother's Womb. And even Jacob himself, although as peaceable as he was plain, had yet a Law in his Members, as it were lifting up the heel against the Law in his Mind. The best of Men are but Men, and therefore at their best will still be subject to Corruption. Some Canaanites will be left in the holiest Land. S. Paul himself had fears and fightings, as well within as without.

{ Gal. 5. 17.  
Rom. 8. 7.

And notwithstanding his *Abundance*, as well of *Grace*, as of *Revelations*, he had a *thorn in the Flesh*, which did exceedingly *terrifie* and *wound* his *Spirit*. Nor was *David* more afflicted by envious *Saul*, than his *inward* man was vexed by the hostilities of the *outward*. When our *Spirits* are *most willing* to do the will of our Lord, we are forced to complain that our *Flesh* is *weak*; and in that very *weakness* does one of its *chiefest strengths* lie. Even then when we can say, *Lord we believe*, we have great reason to add, *help thou our unbelief*. Let the *Flesh* (like the *Thief*, I mean the unconverted Thief on our Saviour's Cross,) be *bound up* and *Crucified*, yet (like the very same Thief) it will continue to *resist*, or *revile* the Spirit. As when the Taylor in the *Apologue* had stopt the *mouth* of his *scolding Wife*, She was able still to *rail* with her *finger's ends*. An *Apologue* not so *light*, as the *moral* of it is *grave* and *serious*. For the Spirit and the *Flesh* are (in *Aristotle's* Comparison) as the  $\delta \alpha \nu \eta \gamma$  and the  $\tau \omicron \delta \eta \lambda \omega$ , i. e. as the *Husband* and the *Wife*; and so the *moral* of the *Apologue* may be affirmed to be This. Whilst *Fleshly Lusts* have a Being, are unmortified and alive, let *congruous* Grace do what it can, (so long as it is not *irresistible*,) there will be Hostilities against

against the Spirit. For were it possible for the *Flesh* to cease from warring against the *Spirit*, a Man might possibly be *innocent* on this Side Heaven. Which because he cannot be, *the Carnal mind* by sound Consequence must needs be at enmity with God. Hence it is that *Rank Atheists* are very commonly *Rank Wits* too, full of Artifices and Tricks, very skilfull to destroy Themselves and others. And 'tis an Enmity so much the worse, even because it is *Spiritual*, as well as *Carnal*, or (to use *S. Paul's* language) a *Carnal mind*. For the *Spirit of a man*, which by nature goeth upwards, when like the *\*Spirit of a beast*, it tendeth downwards, quite against its own nature, and as it were clings unto the Earth by being *Carnal*, it is not onely a strong, but a *subtil* Enemy. It wageth war against the Soul, that is, *itself*, as well by *stratagem*, as by force. It is a *Treacherous*, *coluquing*, *\*deceitfull* Thing. And though it seems to be but one of those *three Brigades* whereof the Devil's whole Army is said by *S. John* to be compos'd, (the Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eye, and the Pride of Life,) yet has it all the *lower World* to serve for its *Armory* or *Magazin*; Profit, and Pleasure, and Poms, and Vanities, Beauty, and Honour, and Strength, and Greatness, and (to express

\* Ecclef. 3.  
21.

\* Heb. 3 13.

express it in a word ) All the *Darts* of the *Flesh* which it does *shoot* ( after the measure that the Devil gives Aim,) against the *Spirit*, are commonly drawn out of *that* one *Quiver*, that is to say, *the Carnal mind*.

§ 16. Since then our Enemies are *such*, as have been describ'd ; so *strongly*, so *subtilly*, so *incessantly* warring against the Soul , ( A Soul adorn'd with *God's Image*, and indu'd with his *Spirit*, and redeem'd with his *Blood*, and sustain'd with his *Grace*, and in a capacity of his *Glory*,) our very *Dangers* may serve for *Orators*, to incourage and incite us in our *Encounters*. And our *Dangers* are to be measur'd by the preciousness of the *Subject*, or *Prize* we fight for. And *this* is here expressed to be *the Soul*. That's the *Helena*  $\pi\epsilon\mu\delta\chi\eta\tau\omicron$ , or  $\mu\eta\lambda\omicron\nu\ \epsilon\lambda\epsilon\delta\omicron\varsigma$ , the *Ball* or *Apple* of *contention*, thrown as 'twere *between us*, and our *Fleshy Lusts* ; We asserting it to *God*, and They to *Satan* ; We contending for its *Safety*, and They contriving its *Destruction*. Now so infinite is the difference between the values to be put upon *Souls* and *Bodies*, that He who *\*rejoyced* in those *Afflictions* which did but war against the *Body*, did *groan* and *tremble* under the *Lusts*, which still did war against his *Soul*. And in comparison of the *hurt*, which may

Anima, Dei  
insignita I-  
mage, de-  
corata Simi-  
litudine, de-  
spersata Fide.  
dotata Spiri-  
tu, redempta  
Sanguine, de-  
putata cum  
Angelis, ca-  
pa: Beatitu-  
dinis, heres  
Bonitatis, Ra-  
tionis parti-  
ceps, quid tibi  
cum Carne  
unde ista pa-  
teris? Ber-  
nard de Ani-  
ma. c. 3.  
p. 1051.

\* Rom. 5. 3.  
Philip. 2. 17.  
Rom. 7. 24.



may happen unto the *Soul*, we are forbidden to fear them that can kill the *Body*. For what is the *Body*, in its original, but *Dust* and *Ashes*? what, at the best of its Consistence, but a fair *Nursery* of *Diseases*? And what, when parted from the *Soul*, but the *food* of *Worms*? whereas the *Soul* is That *Spouse*, which God hath betrothed to himself, *Hos. 2. 19, 20*. Not a *Citizen* onely of *Heaven*, but *Heaven* itself; as *S. Gregory* and *S. Bernard* are pleas'd to call her. And therefore if the *Warriers* or *Fleshly Lusts* I now speak of, do fight against our *immortal Souls*, it concerns us as much as our *Souls* are worth, to war against, by abstaining from *Fleshly Lusts*; By which if ever we are conquer'd, we are undone. As being dead whilst we live, (to use *S. Paul's* Oxumoron) and (which is a great deal sadder) as being to live when we are dead too, although it be onely to die for ever, or rather to be for ever dying. These are some of those foolish and burtfull Lusts, which drown the *Soul* in misery and perdition. They transform the whole man into a State of Brutality. They cast us out of his presence, in whose presence is life, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore. For when 'tis said by the Apostle, That if we live after the *Flesh*, we shall die; his mean-

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*Liquido colligere debemus, quia si Deus Sapientia, Anima autem Justitiae Sedes sapientiae, dum Calum dicitur Sedes Dei, Anima Justitiae ergo est Calum.* Greg. Mag. in Evang. Homil. 38. T. 2. p. 133, 134. Vide etiam Bernard. super Cantica, Sermon. 27. p. 646.

1 Tim. 6. 9.

Rom. 8. 13.

ing cannot but be This, *That we shall certainly be damn'd.* For They that live after the Spirit must die the *first Death*, and Therefore *This* other must needs me meant of the *Second*. Thus our *Dangers* do incourage us in our Encounters.

§ 17. Another Incouragement which we injoy whilst we are prosecuting our *War* against *Fleshly Lusts*, lies in the *Goodness*, and the *Nobleness*, and ( as the consequence of Both ) in the *Pleasure* of it. For what can be better in it self, than to *side* with the Spirit against the *Flesh*? with the *Rational* part in us against the *Brutal*? what more *honourable*, or *noble*, than to win a *Victory over our selves*? It was not near so great a Glory to the Young man of *Macedon* to have brought into Subjection *all* the *Provinces* of *Asia*, as it had been to have subdued at once his *Avarice* and his *Ambition*. For 'tis not the *greatness* of the *Conquest*, but the *goodness* of the *fight*, which yields an *happiness* to the *Victor*, and solid *glory* to his *success*. When *Paul* was ready to be offer'd, and at the Approach of his *Departure*, his chiefest *Comfort* and *Honour* stood both in *This*, That he had fought the good fight, that he had finished his Course, and had kept the *Faith*: that he had prosperously ingaged against *Fleshly Lusts*, which, however they had warred, had

had *not prevailed* against his Soul. Many are worsted in their Warfare, for want of distinguishing (as they ought) between the *Acts* and the *Effects* of their *Self-denials*. 'Tis true the *Act* of *Self-denial* will affect the *best* of us with *pain* or *trouble*; but how much more will it *delight* us by our Injoyment of its *Effects*? (as the drawing of a Tooth is painfull and troublesome for a moment, although in order to perfect ease.) We know the *Soul* is the *life*, and so the *happiness* of the *Body*, as *God* himself is both the *happiness* and the *life* of the *Soul*. And as there is no *greater pleasure*, than that which affects the very *Soul* of a Pious man, (for 'tis a Proverbial Antimetabole, and in every man's mouth, that the Pleasure of the Soul is the Soul of Pleasure,) so the *Pleasure* of the *Soul* can hardly be *greater*, or *more refin'd*, than in *despising* and *rejecting* the grosser *Pleasures* of the *Body*. Nor need we fear that *such a Pleasure* is not attainable at all, because it does not *grow up*, like a worthless *Mushroom*, in a night; but rather (like the goodly Rose) requires a certain Tract of Time to give it *Ripeness*. For a Left-handed *Conscience*, like a Left-handed *Man*, by *abstaining* long enough from the *use* of the *Left*, and by *continuing* long enough the *use*

and *practice* of the *Right*, will perform the same Actions with *ease* and *pleasure*, which at present may be *difficult*, and *painfull* to him. *Habitual Sickneses* of Soul being like to those *inveterate diseases* of the *Body*, which cannot possibly be cur'd by *one* or *two* *Tasts* of a Noble Med'cin, but must submit to whole *Methods* and *Courses* of it. Many *Sciences* and *Arts* are extremely *t tedious* to such as are but *new beginners* and *learners* in them; which yet will yield them the greatest *Comfort*, *Content*, and *Pleasure*, as soon as *Use* and *Understanding* hath bred a very good *Acquaintance* and *Friendship* with them. Will any Man who is not *mad*, *break off* the *finger* of his *Watch* as an useles Thing, because he cannot *perceive* it *moving*? or leave off the *practice* of a generous *abstinence* from his *Debauches*, because his very *first* *Indeavours* of *Self-denial* and *Pious life* are not so *pleasant* or so *easy*, as he expected? let him have *patience*, and That *Finger* will most *apparently*, though *insensibly*, make a progress from *this*, to *another* hour. So let him stay his *due time*, and his *practice* of *Reformation* will pass from *difficult* to *easy*, from *easy* to *usefull* and *familiar*, from *familiar* to *delightfull* and *joyous* also. Let a *vitious* man get but the *knack* of *Virtue*, (which without *Custom* he cannot

cannot have,) and he will wonder how he could once have been *pleas'd* with *Vice*. But he who stays 'till it is *pleasant* to leave his gross pleasures, will never leave them; because the pleasure of leaving such, cannot begin 'till they are left. From whence it follows, that He who will not be perswaded to persevere in abstaining from *Fleshly Lusts*, until his *Abstinence* is *ease*, and *pleasant* to him, is like the natural Fool of Greece, whom *Hierocles* in his *assiz* does merrily call his *Athenian Scholar*, who determin'd within Himself *never to go into the Water*, until (before hand) he might be sure that he could swim. Or like the overwary Messenger (of whom we read in the *Spanish Story*) who having been threaten'd under a Pœnalty by him that sent him, not to return without an Answer, would not part with his Letter to the Person to whom 'twas sent, until he might first have an Answer to it. For a man not to abstain from *Fleshly Lust* till he finds it pleasant, is just as senseless, and as absurd, as for a man to be impatient of ever learning the use of *Books*, 'till he can read and understand them with *ease* and *pleasure*; or to grumble at the labour of taking a *Pencil* into his hand, until he finds he can use it like some *Apelles*. If there is any man that

hears me, who is conscious to himself of so great a Folly, I have no more to beg of him than barely This; That he will not come with *Prejudice* to the *Amendment* of his *Life*, (as the *Israelites* did to the *Land of Promise*, in fear of *Anakims* and *Lions* to be incounter'd in the way,) and that he will not distrust a vertuous course'till he has try'd it. That he will weigh Vice and Virtue in *equal Scales*, before he cleaves unto the *First*, or rejects the *Second*. That he will have so much *Justice* both for *God* and *Himself*, as to make an essay, whether a *Customary Abstinence from Fleeshly Lusts*, will not yield him more pleasure than all his *Customary Injoyments* have ever done. That he will once have the courage to make a *Trial of new obedience*, (I mean an *incorrupt and impartial Trial*.) And that being once *ingag'd* in the practice of it, he will not poorly *start back* at its first *uncouthness*; (for *difficilia quæ pulchra*, the goodliest things in their Injoyment are ever difficult in their acquist;) but that imitating the Bravery of *Caleb* and *Josua*, he will deferr to make a *Judgement* or *final Æstimate* of the Thing, 'till he has had a *Sound proof* and *experience* of it. For if the *Savour* and the *Tast* he shall have of *Virtue*, be but as *much*, and as *long*, as his

Tast



Tast of Vice, he will sooner swallow the *Stings* and the *Gall* of *Asps*, than vouchsafe the *licking* up of his nauseous *Vomit*.

§ 18. But besides *this* Incouragement (which of it self is very great) from the *Fight it self*, (a fight for *God* against *Satan*, and for the *Interest* of the *Soul* against *Fleshly Lusts*,) there is a *Third* arising to us from the consideration of our *support*. For 'tis the powerfull *Spirit of God*, which helpeth our *Infirmities*. Yea, when our *Infirmities* are so potent, as to disable us even from *praying*, and from *crying out* for *help*, the *Spirit* interceedeth for us with *Groans* which cannot be uttered. And at the *intercession* of such a *Spirit*, our *Spiritual Enemies* will fly, as the *walls of Jericho* did fall at the *sound* of a *Trumpet*. 'Twas by the help of *This Spirit*, that though the *Enemies of David* were still in bond to swallow him up, yet he was able still to say, He would not fear what *Flesh* could do unto him. Whilst the *weapons of our warfare* are not *Carnal*, but *Spiritual*, They are mighty, through *God*, to the pulling down of strong *Holds*; casting down *Imaginations*, and every high thing that exalteth it self against *God*, and bringing into captivity every *Thought* to the obedience of *Christ*. Our weapons indeed are mighty, but 'tis through *God*,

Rom. 8. 26.

Psal. 56. 2, 4.

Joh. 16. ult.

Rom. 7. 24.

God, who does not onely *guide* our Feet, but also *lifts* up our Hands, and *directs* our Blows, and often *strikes* for us *Himself* too. And yet the *Victory* which he *wins*, his Goodness placeth to our *Accompt*. His is the *Glory* of the Conquest, but Ours the *Comfort*. And This accordingly was the Incouragement our Saviour gave to his Apostles, *Be of good Comfort, I have overcome the World*. The Sting of Death, which is Sin, He hath pluck'd out for us. The strength of Sin, which is the Law, He hath weaken'd in our behalf. He hath routed our common Enemy, and looks that *We* should follow the chase. Which the Apostle well considering, did seem (with one and the same Breath,) to turn his out-cry into an *Eulogy*, his *complaint* into a *Jubily*, his *Temptations* of Despair into Joy and *Triumph*. For no sooner had he said, *O wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death ?* But in the next words he added, *I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord*. Nay farther yet ; He does not onely say in another place, *Thanks be to God who hath given us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ* ; But also invents a *new Word*, to shew the greatness of our Victory above that of others ; *Through Him that loved us*, *καὶ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν* ( says the Text )

we do not onely overcome, but are more than Conquerors. Indeed without Him our strength is weakness, our Wisdom Folly; and accordingly the Apostle does very appolately exhort us, *to be strong in the Lord, and in the Power of His might. Eph. 6. 10.* And when 'tis said by S. John, *Ye are of God, little Children, and have overcome them,* he gives this Reason, *Because greater is He that is in You, than he that is in the World.* For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the World; and this is the Victory that overcometh the World, even our Faith. *1 Job. 5. 4.* This must therefore be our Prayer, *That Christ may dwell in our Hearts by Faith.* And this will then be our Incouragement, *That being strengthened with might in the Inward man, we shall be able to stand in the evil Day.*

§ 19. But we have yet another Incouragement, to *wrestle with* and to fight against *Fleshly Lusts*, from the exceeding great *Richneß* of our *Reward.* For when we can say with the Apostle, *we have fought the good fight,* we may also say with him in the same Assurance, because upon the same Ground, *Henceforth is laid up for us a Crown of Righteousneß.* Betwixt which two there is so vast a Disproportion that the *Fight* is for a *moment*, and the *Sufferings* growing

Rom. 8. 37.

1 Joh. 2. 14.

Eph. 3. 17.

Ver. 16.

2 Tim. 4. 8.

A Bold expression I  
confess, but  
'tis S. Paul's,  
2 Cor. 4. 17.

Col. 3. 5.  
Rom. 8. 13.

from it do quickly *wither*; whereas the *Crown* is *immarcescible*, such as cannot but enjoy an eternal Spring. And therefore S. Paul vvas not out in his *Reckoning*, vvhhen he *reckon'd* that the *Sufferings* (and amongst Them the *Self-denials*) of this present time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. Rom. 8. 18. Which kind of Sufferings and Self-denials do not onely *præcede*, but even *work* for us a weight of Glory. 2 Cor. 4. 17. And the reason of This expression may be argued even from hence, That to *fight against* the *Flesh*, so far forth as to *mortifie*, and *put it to Death*, (which are the literal importance of the Apostles two words, *νεκρῶν*, & *θανάτων*,) is to make our selves *Partakers of the sufferings of Christ*. Which *sufferings of Christ*, do not onely *occasion*, but clearly *work* for us a weight of Glory. And for this very end do we *partake of Christ's sufferings*, (by Self-denials on his Accompt,) That when his Glory shall be revealed, we may also *rejoyce with exceeding Joy*. 1 Pet. 4. 13. Yea the bare consideration of such an unspeakable Reward, did put S. Paul upon *Rejoycing*, not onely after, but in his *Sufferings* and *Self-denials*. Col. 1. 24. A Reward great enough to make a *Coward* turn *Fighter*. For who would not *fight* even for fear,

fear, that he shall lose such a Reward? The onely thing we have to fear, is our *not fighting enough* to win the Prize we fight for. Now every *Fighter* (says our Apostle, and so say all Agonistick Writers,) is to keep a strict *Diet*. S. Paul's words are, *He must be \*temperate in all Things.* Alluding plainly to the *Olympicks*, in which the *Combatans* were *dieted* for *forty Days*. Every Man had his *Lent*, whereby to fit him for his *Encounter*; and his *Abstinence* was his *Armour*, whereby to *guard* him from a *Defeat*. And if *They* were so *Abstemious*, to gain a *corruptible Crown*, how much more should we *abstain*, for the gaining of a Crown which is not liable to corruption? not onely an *exceeding*, but an *æternal* weight of Glory? Such was the Logick with which S. Paul argued, and such was the Rule of his *Acting* too. For (saith He) *I so run, not as uncertainly; So fight I, not as one that beateth the Air.* But I keep under my *Body*, and bring it into *subjection*. His own words are, *ἐν ᾧ πάσῃ, & δαλμαζῶν.* I fight as a *Pancratiast*, (that is,) as a *Cuffer*, and *Wrestler* too. I beat my *Body black and blue*? I make an arrant *Slave* of it; lay upon it both the *Yoke* and the *Cross* of *Christ*; subdue my *Flesh* unto my *Spirit*; deny my self the use of

\* 1 Cor. 9. 25.

Ver. 26, 27.

my Christian Liberty ; *suffer* the *l/3* of many things which I might *lawfully enjoy* ; that by any means I may attain to the Resurrection of the Dead, that by any means possible I may *apprehend That*, for which I am also *apprehended of Christ Jesus*. All which I take to be imported by those *two words*, 1 Cor. 9. 27. Where by the way we may observe of our Apostle S. Paul, He did not war against *Another's*, but against *his own Body*. For he knew *his own Body* was the worst *Enemy* to his *Soul* ; and that to save himself from it, was to *keep it under*. He knew the *Flesh* to be so *sturdy*, and so *implacable* a Rebel, that if he should suffer it to *thrive*, and to *get an Head*, he would have reason to be *jealous* of its *Aspirings* ; and to stand in some fear, *lest whilst he preached unto others, He himself might become a Castaway*.

§ 20. Now we must go, and do likewise. For we expect the same *Crown*, and are beset with the same *Enemies*, by which if *he* was in danger'd, much more are *we*. And therefore if it was *His* way, much more must it be *Ours*, to *abstain* in good earnest from *Fleshly Lusts*, by *abstaining* from the *things* by which they are *nourished* and *upheld*. *Intemperance* is the *Mother* of all the rest, or if not properly the *Mother*,



ther, yet at least she is the *Nurse*, as being evermore *feeding*, and making *provision* for the *Flesh*, and by consequence giving *strength* to its several *Lusts*. And therefore *striving for the Mystery*, let us be *temperate in all things*. Let us add *Fasting* unto our *Prayers*, and constant *Watchfulness* unto our *Fasting*, and persevere in all *Three*, till we have *crucified the Flesh with the Affections and Lusts*. For since our *Lusts* are so *restless* as never ceasing to *rebell*, we must be every whit as *restless* in reducing such *Rebels* to their *Allegiance*. Nay it concerns us to be *restless*, though they should possibly be at *rest*. For as a *Leopard*, or a *Lion*, though sometimes *gentle*, and *debonaire*, are yet with reason *kept close*, in *Chains*, or *Dungeons*, because they still retain the *nature of salvage Beasts*; so *Fleshly Lusts*, though very much *tamer* at one *Season*, than at another, do yet retain the whole *nature of Fleshly Lusts*, and if they are not lock'd up in *Chains*, or thrust down into a *Dungeon*, we know not how soon they may *rage* against us. However then our *Fleshly Lusts* may *Seem* to be at peace with us, let us never be at peace with our *Fleshly Lusts*. And though the *vileness* of our *Enemies*, or the *miseries* of a *Defeat*, the *Honour* and *Gallantry*

1 Tim. 6. 12.

of our *Ingagement*, or the *Divinity* of our *Support*, (by the Grace of God, and the Means of Grace,) should not be able of *themselves* to prevail upon us, yet the additional consideration of the *Immensity* of our *Reward*, should (one would think) beget within us the noblest courage and resolution. We find them both in one Text, and spoken both with one Breath, and the later is an Inference which cannot but follow from the former, That whosoever will but *fight the good fight of Faith*, will not fail to *lay hold on Eternal life*.

And this the God of all Mercy prepare us for, both for the Glory of his Grace, and for the Worthiness of his Son, unto whom with the Father in the unity of the Spirit, be all Obedience and Thanksgiving for ever and ever. *Amen.*

OF  
ABSTAINING  
In particular from  
DISOBEDIENCE  
TO  
AUTHORITY

In things INDIFFERENT,

As from the *worst* and the *most scandalous*  
of all FLESHLY LUSTS, in  
S. Peter's Judgment.

I PET. 2. 13.

*Submit your selves to every Ordinance of  
Man for the Lord's sake.*

§ 1. **S**aint Peter having exhorted us to ab-  
stain from *Fleshly Lusts which war a-  
gainst the Soul*, and inforc'd his Exhortation  
with Five strong Reasons, (in the two next  
Verses

Verſes before my Text,) ſtraight gives an Inſtance in the moſt *ſcandalous* and the moſt *damning* piece of *Carnality*, of all thoſe ſorts in general from which he *exhorted* us to *abſtain*. For what *Connexion* or *Coherence* can there be betwixt my preſent and former Text, (lying as *cloſe* by one another, as by *S. Peter* they could be laid,) unleſs it be that *Diſobedience* to human Governours and *Laws*, is of all *Fleſhly Luſts* the moſt *diſgracefull* to *Chriſtianity*, the moſt *repugnant* to the *Gospel* of *Jeſus Chriſt*, moſt *incompatible* with the *Profeſſion* and the *Salvation* of a *Chriſtian*? That *this* is the meaning of *S. Peter*, ſeems to be clear from the word *ἐν*, very ſignificant in the Original, however omitted in the Tranſlation. To ſtop the Mouths of thoſe Enemies *who ſpeak againſt you as evil Doers*, (ſays *S. Peter* to the Chriſtians of the *Διακονεῖς*, to whom he writes,) by your *abſtaining from Fleſhly Luſts*, and by your *unblameable Converſation among the Gentiles*, *ὑποτάγντε ἐν*, be ye ſubjected, and *ὑποτάγντε ἐν*, be ye *Therefore* ſubjected; and *πᾶσιν κτίσιν ἀνθρώπων*, to every human Creature, that is to ſay, to every Man who is a *Magiſtrate*, created by God (not by the People) to be a *Governour*. But ſtill a Creature, and a Man, and (Both together) an human

*human Creature*; wholly *mortal*, as to his *Person*; though wholly *divine*, as to his *Office*. Therefore to *Him* submit your selves, διὰ τὸ ὄνομα, not for the *Magistrates* or the *People's*, or your own sakes onely, but first and chiefly for the *Lord's*. First, because of the *Lord's Precept*, *Matth. 22. 21*. Next, because of the *Lord's Example*, *Matth. 17. 27*. Thirdly, because of the *Lord's Ordaining* him, *Rom. 13. 1, 2*. Fourthly, because He bears the *Lord's Image*, and is the *Lord's Deputy*, *Lieutenant*, or *Vicerent* upon Earth, the *Lord's Minister*, and *Avenger*, *Rom. 13. 4*. Lastly, because ye must love the *Lord*, (v. 5.) and love the *Lord* ye cannot, unless ye love the *Lord's Surrogate*, and your love to *Superiours* is to be seen in your *Obedience*.

Again, submit your selves *without partiality*, (πάση, is the *Apostle's* word,) to *every* Ordinance of Man, or to *All* the *Lord's* *Surrogates* without exception. Not onely to the *Supreme*, as sent by *God's* Providence, and *God's* Commission; but to *subordinate* Rulers also, as sent by Commission from the *Supreme*. Not to the *Emperour* onely *Himself*, (whether *Claudius*, or *Nero*, at the writing of this Epistle,) but to *Proconsuls*, and *Procurators*, both of

Sf

Asia,

*Asia*, and *Bithynia*, as sent by *Cæsar*. Yet not to Them, *against Him*; not to *Furius Camillus Scribonianus*, against *Claudius*: not to the Parliament, *against the King*; nor to the *King*, against *Himself*; not at all to his *Authority*, against his *Person*; nor in his *Right*, to his *Wrong*; (as some *Christians* have plaid the Sophisters to the reproach of *Christianity*;) But to *each* in his *order*. To the *King*, as *Supreme*; (so it follows in the Text,) and to *Governours*, as sent by *Him*. Where the word *as* is very emphatical. *As*, and *no otherwise*, than as by *Him* sent. *As*, and *no otherwise*, than for *His sake*, and on *His account*. And so, à quatenus ad omne optime valet argumentum. Submit yourselves to *All*, as sent by *Him*; and submit yourselves to *None*, but so far forth as *He sends* them. *S. Peter's* Logick is very plain, and makes the Case very clear upon every side.

§ 2. Of all the *Arguments* or *Reasons* which are producible for the *inforcing S. Peter's* Precept, here are *two* of concernment to Men in *general*, and a *Third* for *Believers*, or *Christian* People in *particular*. Of the two former, the *first* is taken from the *Author* and *Affector* of All Authorities, unto which Men as Men are here commanded to *submit*. They must do it *prop-*  
ter



ter *Dominum*, because *The Lord* hath *Authorized* human Authorities upon Earth, and *The Lord* will *defend* or *avenge* them All. The *second* is taken from the *End* of the divine *Constitution* of Human Authorities in the World. To wit, an equal *Distribution* both of *Punishments*, and *Rewards*. Those to *Evil-Doers*, and These to *Them that do well*. (v. 14.) By which *Distribution* of which two things is procured the *Peace* and *Quiet*, and by consequence the *Happiness* of human life. The *Third* and *special* Argument, touching us *meerly* as we are *Christians*, is taken from the *Credit* of *Jesus Christ* and *His Gospel*, which *We* who are *Christians* are highly obliged to assert. And assert it we cannot by any one Argument so well, as by *submitting our selves* impartially to every *Ordinance of Man*. By making it appear to the *Jews* and *Heathens*, that the *Gospel* or *Law of Christ* obliges its Subjects to *live a peaceable and quiet life in all godliness and honesty*. That *Christianity* is a Religion, either *reviving* or *introducing* love and *loyalty* and *order* and *Tranquillity* into the World. That *Obedience* to the Authority of human *Laws* and *Legislators*, is one of the *Prime Characteristics* whereby a *Christian* is to be known. That the best *Chri-*

Christians are still the *loyal'st*. That the more we love and fear the *Lord Jesus Christ*, the more we submit for the *Lord's sake* to every Ordinance of *Man*. And that They who do otherwise, are but *Titular Christians*; not at all Christians, but in *Profession*; none of *Christ's Followers*, but in *Repute*. And therefore *Christianity* must not be *estimated* by *Them*, who are *Rebels* to the *Gospel of Jesus Christ*. Nor must *We* who are *The Lord's*, by submitting our selves for the *Lord's sake*, be measur'd by *Them* who are none of *Us*, but *Disorderly Walkers* out of the High way to Heaven, from whom *S. Paul* bids us withdraw our selves; and whom *S. John* bids us not receive into our Houses, nor bid them God speed; and that for the *Credit* of the *Gospel*, which (but for this *Prophylactick*) *They* would bring into *Disgrace*.

§ 3. This Third and last and special Argument of *S. Peter*, drawn from the *Credit* of *Christianity*, for the inforcing of our *Submission* to every Ordinance of *Man*, thereby meaning our *Obedience* to human Laws and Legislators, is of so great a value with him, and so peculiar to us as Christians, that He urges This *Twice* in a little room; immediately before, and immediately after my present Text. First, our Loyalty and Obe.

Obedience, and all other honest Conversation must be made known unto The Gentiles, that they who speak against us as Evil-doers may by our good works which they shall behold, glorifie God in the day of Visitation. (v.12.) Next, it is the will of God, that with such our well-doing we may put to silence the ignorance of foolish Men. (v.15.) This is an Argument which S. Paul does urge often, whereby to make men afraid and ashamed of Vice. Through you (says He unto the Christians who dwelt at Rome) the Name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles. For the unbelieving Gentiles do judge by your Practice of your Profession; by the Blemishes of your lives who are called Christians, they grow averse to Christianity; and have no good opinion of Christ himself whom you worship, because they guess that your Religion has so very ill an influence upon your Lives. So again argues S. Paul to Timothy, Let as many Servants as are under the Yoke (either under Heathen Masters, or amongst Heathen Men) count their Masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his Doctrine be not blasphemed. For when Servants are refractory, or Subjects rebellious, although they are such to Heathen Masters or Magistrates, they draw disgrace upon the

Rom.2. 24.

1 Tim.6.1.

Ver. 2.

Tit. 2. 5.

Gospel, and tempt the *Infidels* to believe that men are the worse for being *Christians*; that the *Doctrine* of *Christ* is corruptive of *Principles*, as well as *Manners*; and *Christian Liberty* but a *Cloak* for rebellious *Practise*. Now to antidote this *Venom*, and to wipe off this *Disparagement*, as well from the *Doctrine*, as from the *Name* of *Jesus Christ*, *S. Paul* commands *Timothy* to be earnest and often in preaching *Obedience* and *Submission* to all *Superiours*; esteeming These the weightier things of the *Christian Law*. And therefore These things Teach and Exhort, (says He to *Timothy* with an *Emphasis*,) as being Things most essential, not onely to the saving of *Christian's Souls*, but essential to the saving of *Christianity it self*, and to the saving of our *Saviour* from being blasphemed among the *Gentiles*. And for as much as no *Obedience* can be more naturally or politically, or religiously due from one *Mortal* unto another, than from *Wives to their own Husbands*, *S. Paul* does therefore press *Titus* to preach up This also for This great End, that the *Word of God* be not blasphemed. That *Christian Religion* may not suffer by their *Enemies* taking notice of their *un-christian* disobedience to those above them. That *Jews* or *Gentiles* may not suspect any ill

Issues

*Issues or Infusions of Christian Principles*, as if they were *exclusive* of *moral Virtue*; and that *Inferiours* either *were*, or that they *might* be the worse for their being *Christians*. Lastly, since *Masters* are a kind of *Domestick Magistrates*, to whom *Obedience* also is *due* by the same *divine Right*, (and no sturdy *Servant* will ever make a good *Subject*,) *Servants* therefore must be urged to be *Obedient to their own Masters*, and to please them well in all things, not answering again, for This Great Reason, that they may adorn the *Doctrine of God our Saviour* in all things; and that he who is of the contrary part may be *asham'd*, having no evil thing to say of them.

Ver. 8, 9, 10.

§ 4. From All which ways of Argumentation put together, I conceive my self qualified to make these profitable Conclusions. That *Obedience* and *Submission* to every *Ordinance of man for the Lord's sake*, whether *Supreme*, or *Subordinate* by his Commission, does make the most (of all Duties) for the *Ornament* and *Honour of Christianity*. That *Disobedience* and *Resistance* do make the most for its *Disgrace*. That the *Doctrine of Obedience* to publick Parents, both *Civil* and *Ecclesiastical*, is more *authenticated* and *taught* by *Jesus Christ* and his *Apostles* through-

throughout the *Gospel*, than by all other Systems, Codes, or Pandects, by all other *Bodies*, Collections, or Constitutions of *Religion*, or *Philosophy*, throughout the World. From all which things it seems to follow, that they who call themselves *Christians*, and yet are Authors or Fomenters of Schisms and Factions, (such industrious *Embroiders* of Church and State, by sowing the Seeds of discontentment and of dissatisfaction in People's Minds, as if they long'd to be fishing in Troubl'd Waters and to be *licking up again* those publick *Spoils* and *Revenues*, which they were forced to *disgorge* in the Great Year of *Restitution*,) They (I say) who thus act, and yet do call themselves *Christians*, are the greatest *Antichristians*, the greatest *Adversaries* of *Christ*, and the greatest *underminers* of *Christianity*, which *He* can possibly set on Work who was a *Murderer from the Beginning*. Can any Man wonder at the *spreading* of *Irreligion* and *Atheism*, more *since the Year 41*, than *ever before* in our *Memories*, and perhaps in our *Readings* too? (unless I may except the Days of *Hildebrand*, when *Hell* is said to have *broken loose*?) One account of it is plain and obvious: The horridst Rebellion under Heaven (from after the Year 41) having been managed by



by *Christians*, made the name odious ever since. Inſomuch that ſome *Blasphemers* have dar'd to ſay, (not That *old* and *common* word onely, ſit *Anima mea cum Philoſophis*, but as the effect of a greater hatred,) *They would not indure going to heaven, if they thought they ſhould meet with ſuch Chriſtians There.* Which, though the language of the moſt *ſtupid* and *thick-headed* Sinners, who can no better *distinguish* 'twixt *Words* and *Things*, or 'twixt the *Picture* and the *Life*, or 'twixt the *Vizard* and the true *Face*, or 'twixt the *Actor* and the *Man*, or 'twixt the *Uſe* and the *Abuſe* of the beſt things that can be nam'd, or laſt of all, betwixt a *Nominal* and *Real* Chriſtian; ſhould yet be ſufficient to *deter* ſuch as are *Chriſtians* at leaſt in *Wiſh*, from giving *occaſion* for the future to ſuch *Averſions*. If the *Enemies of Chriſt* would but read over our *Gospel*, and well conſider it, they would be juſter and more ingenuous, than to look upon *Rebels* and *Mutineers*, in Chriſtian Kingdoms and Commonwealths, as truly *Chriſtians*. But rather would gueſs that *out of Malice* they wear the *Profeſſion* of *Chriſtianity*, to make it *odious*; on purpoſe to *bring* it into *diſgrace*; and (as much as in them lies) to make us all *aſham'd* of it. Though God be thanked we are ſo far

Jam. 2. 7.

\* A. 9. 5. 41.

a Rom. 5. 3.

Gal. 6. 14.

from being *asham'd* of the Gospel of Christ, or *asham'd* of our Affliction in the Gospel's being *abus'd*, and in The Adversaries *Blaspheming* that *worthy Name*, by which 'tis our Happinels and our Privilege to be called, that we *\*rejoyce* to be thought worthy to suffer shame for Christ's sake. Yea 'tis our *Καυχία*, Such Disgrace is our *Boasting*; and we *a* glory in Tribulations. Yea one step farther S. Paul advances; we do so *glory* in our *disparagement* which we suffer for our *Submission* to every Ordinance of man upon Christ's *acct*, or in Obedience to his Doctrine, or for the Lord's sake, (as S. Peter speaks,) that we *glory* in *Nothing* else. God forbid that we should *Glory* (says S. Paul to the Galatians) *save* in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the World is crucified unto us, and we unto the World.

§ 5. But what I speak last is but Occasional, and may be reckon'd as a Parenthesis, shewing All are not stagger'd or wavering in the Faith, though many are. And indeed they are so many whom the Schisms and Rebellions of men professing Christianity have made to waver, if there are not many more whom they have made to fall off; There are so many who do suspect the Christian Name in them that wear it as a cloak of Maliciousness,

*ciouſneß* (which *S. Peter* provides againſt in the 16<sup>th</sup>. Verſe of this Chapter,) and ſo many who do *detest* it for being ſo worn; that if ever there can be any, *This* is certainly the Time, wherein the People are to be preſs'd to obey their *Governours*. God I mean in the *fiſt* place, and human Authority in the *ſecond*. And *This* as really in the *ſecond*, as that *other* in the *fiſt*, becauſe our *Obedience* to the *fiſt* does clearly *depend* (for its *Completion*) upon our *Obedience* to the *ſecond*. Men ſhould be made to underſtand, by perſpicuous and frequent and cogent reaſonings, how the *whole* of our *Religion* may be eaſily wound up into theſe two *Bottoms*; our *adequate Obedience to God and Man*. To the *Royal Law of Chriſt*, and to the *Laws* of the *Nation* wherein we live; whether thoſe *Laws* are *Eccleſiaſtical*, or *Civil*. Theſe two are the *Meaſures* we may warrantably take of *our ſelves*, and *others*. Theſe two are the *Touchſtones* by which we *all* are to be *try'd*. Not the one without the other. There is no *fearing God*, without *honouring the King*, nor *vice verſa*. Our *Obedience to God* is a thing *impoſſible*, without a ſuitable *Obedience* to his *Vicegerents*; whether the *King* as *Supreme*, or other *Governours Subordinate*. Theſe commiſſioned by *Him*, as

Prov. 24. 21.

He by God. Not onely *Scripture*, and *Reason*, but long *Experience*, and *Observation*, have made me look on *These two* as things which are never to be parted, either in *Practice*, or in *Discourse*. Without *These two*, all the rest are worth nothing. And neither of *These* alone can be sincere without the other. *My Son* (says *Solomon*) *fear the Lord and the King, and meddle not with Them that are given to change*. Either fear them *Both*, or *Neither*; though each in his Order; The *Lord* for his own sake, and therefore *First*; The *King* for the *Lord's* sake, and therefore *Second*. But *meddle not with Them*, whose evil communication may corrupt thy good manners; and therefore *meddle not with Them* that are given to change, who do neither fear God, nor honour the King; and accordingly are weigh'd in the opposite Scale of the Wise man's Balance. The People must not onely be told now and then upon the By, but must purposely be taught, nor must they cease from being taught until convinc'd of this union, [The fear of God and of the King, Obedience to Divine and to human Laws,] as essential to our Present and Future Safety.

§ 6. When I inquire into the Reasons, why amongst a World of Christians there is so little of Christianity; and why the Protestants

*testants themselves* divide as much from one another, as they *all* do from the *Church* of *Rome*, which is as much as from the *Jews* or the *Turks* themselves, (for they will no more communicate with the one than with the other, although in most *Fundamentals* they *All agree*,) *This*, amongst several *other* reasons, appears to me to be the *chief*, that there is one thing *Essential* to the *Christian Religion*, and by consequence to the *Salvation* of all men's *Souls*, which, however a *Fundamental*, is not yet so well *known*, or not so heartily *believ'd*, or not so seriously *consider'd*, and *laid to heart*, nor so duly *preached up*, as it ought to be. For if it were, there could not be so many *Schisms* and *Separations* here in *England*, as now there are. There could not be by any means such *Inclinations* to *Rebellion*, such *Oppositions* of *Authority*, and such *Contempt* of *human Laws*, (whether *Civil* or *Ecclesiastical*,) as now we see there are daily; and are rather in a *likelihoood* to grow *worse and worse*, than in any present *Hope* of a sound *Amendment*. Now the *Truth* which is *Essential* to our *Christian Religion*, and to the *saving* of our *Souls*, (which I conceive to be so seldom either *known*, or *believ'd*, or sufficiently *Consider'd*, or *Taught as such*,) is plainly

*This:* [ That the Duties of the First Table, cannot possibly subsist without the Duties of the Second. That Obedience to God, does ever include and carry with it a strict Obedience unto our Governours. That human Laws (where e're the matter of them is lawfull ) are the Laws of God too. And that for this cogent irresistible reason, ( which I have several times urged, and think I can never urge it enough,) because commanded by that Authority which God has commanded us to obey. ]

Heb. 13. 17.

§ 7. Shall I *exemplifie* and *illustrate* what I say by plain Scripture on either side? God *forbids* us by *Moses* to *worship Idols*. And He *bids* us, by *S. Peter*, *submit our selves to every Ordinance of man*. Again, He *bids* us, by *S. Paul*, *Obey them that have the Rule over us*. Now is not God's Law as *binding* in what he *bids*, as in what he *forbids* his peculiar People? I know the former binds *Semper*, and the later *ad Semper*. But *when* they Both bind, they cannot but bind with an *Æquality*. Or is not his peremptory *Command* as obliging under the *Gospel*, as it was under the *Law*? Is not the *Message* of God as *good*, when dispatch'd to us *Christians* by *S. Peter*, and *S. Paul*, and by *Christ himself*, as when sent unto the *Jews* by a single *Moses*?

Is



Is not *God* the same *Jehova* to *Them* and *Us*? and his *Word* as *authentick* in these *last Times*, as in the *First*? Why then do not *Christians* make it a matter of as much *Conscience*, to obey the *Laws of Men* whom *God* has *commanded* them to obey, as *not to worship a graven Image*, which *God* has *commanded* them *not to worship*? That *Each* is *equally* *God's Command*, was *never deny'd* by *any Christian*, nor ever *can* be. And is not His *Command* that we do a *Good* thing, as valid as his *Command* that we *abstain* from what is *evil*? Yea, 'tis as much a *Christian's Duty*, to obey his *lawfull Governours*, and by consequence their *Laws Ecclesiastical and Civil*, as it is, *not to worship a graven Image*. The *first* is as conducive to our *Salvation* as the *second*. And *Damnation* is as much *threatened* to the Breach of the *one*, as the *other* Precept.

§ 8. Now in my slender judgement, (and such as it is, 'tis the best I have,) there can be no likelier way, whereby to win over our *weak and dissenting Brethren* from the ways of *Separation* they have espous'd, than that of labouring to convince them by all good means, from the *Pulpit*, and from the *Pew*, and in the privacy of the *Closet*, by publick *Preaching*, and *Catechizing*, and private *Conferences* especially,

ly (which we shall find to be ever the most effectual,) that (saving the *Dignity* and *Priority* of the *first and great Commandment*, as the Ground and Foundation of all the rest,) our *Obedience* to our *Governours*, and human Laws in force amongst us, is as really an *essential* or *Fundamental* of *Christianity*, and of as absolute *Necessity* to our *Salvation*, as the *Belief* of one *God*, or any other that can be nam'd. It being as rigidly commanded by God in Scripture, under the very same *Promises* of *Reward* if we *obey*, and under the very same *Threats* of *endless Punishment* if we *rebel*. 'Tis not enough that This Doctrine be like the *Homily* of the *Church against Rebellion*, which is commanded by Law and Canon to be read once a year in every Parish; nor is it enough that it be preached up of course upon the *Thirtieth* of *January*, and the *Fifth* of *November*; But 'tis of absolute necessity to be riveted and ingrain'd, first of all into the *Heads*, and after That, into the *Hearts* of People committed to our charge, that they *must needs be Subject*, (that is, *Obedient*) to human Magistrates and Laws, not onely for *fear* of the Magistrates *Wrath*, or for *hope* of worldly *Profit*, no nor onely for *fear* of *Hell*, or for *hope* of *Heaven*, but (as *S. Paul* goes on to tell

tell us) for Conscience sake. I say, for Conscience towards God, and for Conscience towards our selves, because 'tis part of the Law of Nature, and simply Good in it self: not consequentially, (as every positive Law is) but antecedently obliging, and without any the least relation to God's particular written Law, (so often repeated in the Scriptures,) though *This* does make our Disobedience to be the more unexcusable, and the Person disobeying fit for the greater Condemnation. I know the Custom of Disobedience, and the great Numbers of the Refractory, and their Impunity thereupon, and the seemingly-good morals of some Dissenters, and their giving out themselves for the Godly Party, (These five Fallacies put together) have bred an opinion in many weak and unwary Christians, that they need not be subject to the Higher Powers upon Earth, though S. Paul says they Need, Rom. 13.5. That the Powers spoken of are not the Ordinance of God, though S. Paul says they are. (v. 1, 2.) That they may not submit to every Ordinance of Man, though S. Peter says they must. (1 Pet. 2. 13.) And so they imagin that it consists with a Godly life, to slight the Authority of their Governours, and scorn their Laws, unless when their Governours and their Laws

Matth. 23.  
14.

are to *protect* Them and Theirs, both in their *Livelihoods* and their *Lives*, from *fraud and violence*. (in which *one* case, they will readily *submit to every Ordinance of man*, though not for the *Lord's sake*, as *S. Peter* would have it, yet for *their own*.) In a word, they think it lawfull, to *live in Schism*, if not in *Sacrilege*; (still in *Sacrilege* where they are *able*;) and so to *tear in pieces*, not the *Seamleß Coat* onely, but the *Body of Christ* crucified in a mysticall sense.

§ 9. To frame an *Amulet* in proportion to the *Contagion* of this *Disease*, wherewith a world of easie Souls of *catching Complexions* have been *infected*, I humbly conceive it may be made of these Six *Ingredients*.

First, that no *Form of Godlineß* can be other than *Pharisaical*, which is not attended with *common Honesty*.

Next, that none can be truly *honest*, who do not *render to All their Dues*. Tribute to whom Tribute is due, Custom to whom Custom, Fear to whom Fear, Honour to whom Honour. (*Rom. 13. 7.*)

Thirdly, that nothing can be more due from any *one* to any *other*, than from the *Subject* to the *Sovereign*, and *all in Authority under Him*.

To

To wit, the *Tribute of Obedience*, as well as *Money*; the *active Custom of Conformity*, as well as *passive Subjection* to Laws in force; and as well to *Those* Laws which tend to the *publick Peace and Safety*, as those others which maintain us in the *private enjoymēt of our Estates*; The *Fear of offending*, as well as of *suffering* for our *Offences*; lastly, the *Honour of inward Reverence*, as well as of *outward Complaisance*. Not as *Men-pleasers*, but as the *Servants of Christ*.

Fourthly, that a *Disshonest* man is *ipso facto* and *eo ipso* an *ungodly* man; and *Disobedience* to the *Fifth Precept*, as bad as *Rebellion* against the *seventh* or the *eighth*, or rather *worse*; And so a *Common Nonconformist* to Laws establish'd, is (to speak within compass) as *Scandalous* in his *life* as a *Common Drunkard*.

Fifthly, that such a *Subject* as will no longer *allow* the *Laws*, than the *Laws* allow *Him* in his being *lawless*, or no longer than they are *usefull* and *pleasant* to him, (as when they *avenge* him upon his *Enemies*, *protect* him in his *Liberty*, and *assert* him in his *Estate*,) deserves not those *Benefits of Propriety and safety* the *Laws* afford him.

Sixthly, that as many as do avow themselves

*Protestants*, and yet *divide* from the *Church of England*, do contribute a great deal more towards the *bringing in* of *Popery*, than *All* the *Emissaries* of *Rome* could have done *without* them.

§ 10. If we earnestly desire (at least as much as in us lies) to put an end to all *Schisms* and *Separations*; to procure or promote the publick *Peace* of this Nation, and (in That) the publick *Safety*, by procuring and promoting *Uniformity in Religion*, and a general *Conformity* to the *Laws* we live under; we must be restless in convincing all the *People* we can converse with of these *Six things*. Not onely by making them *unable* to *deny*, but by making them *able* to *assert* the *Truth* of them, and thereby to be *Converters* of other men. We must never be at rest, nor let Them be so, until they are *perfect* in these *Particulars*. Or if not in *all*, yet especially in the *chief*. As, that though the *Laws* of *God* cannot possibly *depend* on the *Laws* of *Men*, (but *vice versâ*,) yet our *Obedience* to *God's* own *Laws* does *depend* on our *Obedience* to Those of *Men*. They onely differ by the *Distinction* of *mediate* and *immediate*. And so they are *Termini Convertibiles*; for the *immediate* *Laws* of *Men* are the *mediate* *Laws* of *God*.



God. And that by force of This Text (never enough to be repeated, and chew'd upon,) *Submit your selves to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's sake.* And why *for the Lord's sake*, it not because *the Lord hath so appointed*? What God does *mediately* command by his several *Deputies*, his *Moses*, and his *Aaron*, his *Zerubabel*, and his *Joshua*, and all his *succeeding Legislators* in Church and State, He does as *really*, and as *truly*, and as *bindingly* command, as what He *immediately* commands *by a Voice from Heaven*. In so much that the *Distinction* of *mediate* and *immediate* does no ways *alter* the *Obligation*, or make God's Law either more or less *His*. Now though *the Doctrine* of *Obedience* unto the *mediate* Commands of God, is very learnedly, and piously, and frequently preach'd in many Places, yet it has not universally its wish'd effect, because not preach'd as a *Fundamental*, as *essential* to our *Religion*, and as of *absolute Necessity* to the *Salvation* of the *Soul*. The *Doctrine* cannot be press'd enough, until 'tis press'd in *This Notion*. For *Liberty* is so *sweet*, and *Obligation* so *distastfull* to most mens *Palates*, that they will never make *Conscience* of being *punctually Obedient* to *human Ordinances* and *Laws*, whilst they are

flatter'd that their *Souls* may be *sa'd* with-  
out it.

§ II. Touching the several Ways and Means whereby This Work is to be done, I am plainly of This opinion. That though it may be well done from out the *Pulpit*, in such profitable Discourses as we commonly call *Sermons*; yet very much *better* it may be done out of the *Pew*, in the more *primitive* way of Preaching, and the more *profitable*, I think, which is *Catechizing*. But *best* of all by *private Conference*, wherein we deal with our *Dissenters one by one*; and give them the reasonable Advantage (which in the publick they cannot have) of *alleging* all they can for their Separation, and of *objecting* all they can against our Church from which they separate, and by consequence against the 33 Acts of Parliament by which our Liturgy and Church do remain establish'd. For This Advantage given to *Them* by a Private Conference, gives *Us* also the Advantage of giving *clear* and *full Answers* to their Objections. Which if we do to their *Satisfaction*, we shall gain them back to *God*, and to *His Spouse* (our Dear Mother) *The Church of England*. This we certainly shall do, if their *Error* is but of *Weakness*, and so consistent with an *honest well meaning*

ing Spirit; whereas if of *Wilfulness*, *Pride*, and *Stomach*, Then indeed they are possess'd with such a Deaf and Dumb Spirit, as of which (without a *Miracle*) we are not able to *dispossess* them. And so we may lawfully give them over as *incurable* Patients on whom *All Remedies* are cast away. (As we may lawfully *cease* to cast that which is holy unto Dogs.) For in good Earnest, of the two, I do esteem it a *lesser* Miracle, to make the *Blind* man to see, or the *Deaf* to hear, than either the *Wilfull* to believe, or the *Obstinate* to submit to the clearest Reason. The onely *Charity* left for *Such*, is to deliver them up to *Satan*; I will not say for the *Destruction*, but *Humiliation* of the *Flesh*; that so (if by any means possible) *their Spirits may be saved in the Day of the Lord Jesus*.

1 Cor. 5. 5.

§ 12. If what I have said is not sufficient to reach the end I aim at, I will try what success may happen to obtain by a shorter Method; The Method of *Marcus Æmilius Scaurus*, a very Noble Roman of known Integrity. Who being accused before the People in a very long Oration by *Varius Suetonensis* an envious Knave, defended himself in a very short one; or (to say truly) in *None at all*. For disdaining to contend

tend with his base Enemy in words, He onely ask'd the *Roman People* this Question. *Which of the Two (ye men of Rome) think ye the worthier of your Belief? Varius Sucronensis, who does confidently affirm Æmilius Scaurus to be Guilty? or Æmilius Scaurus rather, who does protest that he is Innocent?* Upon which words alone the Person accused was acquitted; and the Envious Accuser severely censur'd.

In a manner not unlike I shall onely say Here. The great Apostle *S. Peter*, as the Holy Ghost's Penman, bids us all *submit our selves to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's sake. Whether to the King, as Supreme; or unto Governours, as sent by Him.* But certain men of these Times, crept in unawares, who despise Dominion, and speak evil of Dignities, who think themselves of more knowledge and greater Authority than *S. Peter*, do as absolutely forbid, as *S. Peter* bids us. They will not have us submit to any Ordinance of Man, either Subordinate, or Supreme. But they will have us (*for the Lord's sake*) to recalcitrate rather, and kick, at every Ordinance of Man, as inroaching too much on our *Christian Liberty*. Now if I ask which of the Two, (*S. Peter,*

ter, or His Enemies,) we ought to follow,  
or obey ; very confident I am, ye will say  
S. Peter.

These (I think) are words enough to have  
been us'd at This Time, upon the grounds I  
have to hope that *No more are needfull.*

**X x**

**A**

A

22



A

# CAVEAT

Touching the Danger of

## REFUSING

THOSE

## CAVEATS

Our LORD hath given us in His

# GOSPEL.

HEB. 12. 25.

*See that ye Refuse not Him that speaketh. For if They escaped not who refused Him that spake on Earth, much more shall not We escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from Heaven.*

§ 1. **A**S it hath frequently been said of the *Laws of England*, They are so many, and so good, that there needs but one

X x 2

more,

more, for the putting of the *rest* into *Execution*; so I may say with like reason of *Sermons* too; They are so every where *enough*, in case they are *enough beeded*, that there needs but *one more*, for the procuring to the *rest* a *kind and hospitable Reception*. For without such a Reception, 'twere better for us that our *Sermons* were not *fewer* onely, but *worse* too. My reason is, because the *more*, and the more *powerfull* our *Teaching* is, by so much the more our *Non-Proficiency* must needs be render'd *Inexcusable*. Regular *Preaching* was ever reckon'd amongst the *means of Salvation*. And by the *means of Salvation* whosoever is not *better'd*, must needs be *worse*. Not to go *forwards*, is to go *backwards*, in the *School of Christ*; And when the *Gospel* is not admitted but to our *outward Ears* onely, it cannot be but as a *Milstone* about our *Necks* too. For as 'twas said by old *Simeon of Christ Himself*, That he is certainly for the *Fall*, where he is not for the *Rising of many in Israel*; so the *Preaching of Christ*, if we profit not by it, will accidentally be employ'd unto our greater *Damnation*.

Luk. 2. 34.

Mat. 23. 14.  
Mar. 12. 40.

§ 2. Now considering this duly, with one thing more, That as *Creeds* have *multiplied*, True *Believers* have *decreas'd*; That as *Christian Professors*

Professors do grow more *numerous*, *Christianity*, it self doth seem to *lessen*; And that the *Multi- tude* of *Religions* hath been in some Danger to *thrust* Religion out of the *World*, (the Spirit of God being of *Unity*, and *not* of *Division*, where- as the *Devils* name is *Legion*, for they are many,) I say considering all This, both in the *Caus- es* and the *Effects*, and that the Time is long since come, wherein Professors of Christianity will not *indure* sound *Doctrin*e, but having proud and *Itching Ears* do *heap up Teachers* to them- selves, such as *make* for their *Palate*, and *bit* their *Fancy*, (which very Teachers cannot *please* them one minute *longer*, than whilst they *speak* *pleasant Things*, and only *prophecy Deceit*;) and that of *all* our *Epidemical* or *National Sins*, none is likelier to *provoke* or *pull down* *Natio- nal Calamities*, than a general *slighting* and *contempt* of the *Messages* of *God* in the *Months* of *Men*; I think it will not be *impertinent* to press that *Caveat* upon our selves, which *God's inspir'd Amanuens* did inculcate somewhat of- ten on his *Disciples*, (a *Caveat* which *deserves* and *bespeaks* an *Audience*, and which does not onely *invite*, but also *threaten* us into *Atten- tion*;) See that ye *refuse not Him* that *speak* *th*. For if they *escaped not who refused him* that *speak*

Eph. 4. 3, 4.

Mar 9. 9.

2 Tim. 4. 3.

on Earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from Heaven.

§ 3. The Text consider'd in the gross, is a *rowzing* Warning, or Alarm. And being taken in the retail, it hath Three general parts. First, the *matter* of the Warning, which though but *negatively express'd* by a bare [*not refusing him that speaketh,*] yet sure it cannot but be *imply'd*, that we *must give a great Attention to the excellent Things that are spoken by him*. Secondly, the *Persons*, who (above all other Persons) are *most concern'd*; and These are *imply'd* in the Pronoun *Ye*. *Ye* that are *Christians* of the *Hebrews*, as having *heard* and *embraced* the *Faith* of *Christ*, βλέπετε μὴ ποτε ὑμεῖς, See that *Ye* do not refuse. See that *Ye* be not debauch'd by whatsoever solicitations of *Jews* or *Gnosticks*. Thirdly, the *Argument*, or *Ground*, by which the Warning is *inforced* and *urged on*; and *This* again is *twofold*. First the *Experience* of *greater Mercies* than had been shewn unto the *Jews*; Next, the *Sequel* of *greater Judgments*, in case those *Mercies* shall be *abus'd*. The *greater Mercies* are very evident from the *comparison* in the Text. *They* were spoken to by *Moses*, but *We* by *Christ*. \* *Moses* was faithfull in all his house

\* Heb. 3. 5.

house as a *Servant*, but *Christ* as a *Son*. *Moses* spake to *Them* on *Earth*, but *Christ* does speak to *Us* from *Heaven*. And that the *Judgments* must be *greater* in case the *Mercies* shall be *abus'd*, is just as evident from the *Reason* on which the Text is here *built*. For *Ingratitude* is a *Sin* the most *provoking* to be imagin'd. And This receiving its *aggravation* from the *number* and *weight* of foregoing *Favours*, infers our Judge so much the *fiercer* in being *revenged* upon our *Sins*, the more *indearing* obligations we *Sin* against. For if *they* escaped not who refused *Him* that spake on *Earth*, much more shall not *we*, if we turn away from *Him* that speaketh from *Heaven*.

Having thus view'd the Text in its several *parts*, let us observe the *Propositions* which are deducible from the *whole*.

First, as *Men* (in the general) above all other *Creatures*, so *Christians* (in particular) above all other *Men*, are not onely *not to refuse*, but to *imbrace*, and *adore* *Him* that speaketh to them from *Heaven*. We must not onely be *contemplative*, but *practical* Hearers of the Word.

Secondly, *Christians* are not *excusable* for their *Apostacies* or *Neglects*, by the *greatest* *Tempta-*

*Temptations* to be imagin'd. But the greater *Temptations* they meet withall, the greater *use* they are to make of their *Ghostly strength*, and the more to *illustrate* their *Christian Courage*. For

Thirdly, the *more* we do *injoy* the glorious *Privileges* of *Christians*, the *more obnoxious* we are to *consuming Fire*, (in the last Verse of this Chapter,) on a supposal that we be found to be *dry*, and *fruitless*, and so *combustible matter* for it.

Lastly, *not to give Attention* to the Word of God speaking, *not to love* and *entertain it* with *Faith* and *Fear*, does pass with *Him* for a flat *Refusal*. For *παρεκτιν* is to *reject with an Aver-sation*; it is the word *S. Paul* useth, when he exhorts his Son *Timothy* to *refuse Prophane and old Wives Fables*. And the *opposite* Thing to it is *μελοσπιςως ἀφοίχων*, to *give an earnest heed* unto the words which we have heard. (*Heb. 2. 1.*) Betwixt which two because we see not any *medium*, βλέπετε τέτω μάλλον, See the rather *that ye refuse not him that speaketh*.

The *third* of these Propositions is an *Inforcement* of the *first*, and must be therefore treated of in conjunction with it. But yet since it is not the *sole Inforcement*, (nor indeed should be the

1 Tim. 4. 7.

the



the *chief*, were we men of more *ingenuous* and *generous* Natures,) it will be fit to introduce it with some few *others*, and such as are aptest to prevail with men of the *noblest Dispositions*.

Now there are *four* things especially, (all arising out of the Text,) by which this *Warning* may be enforced. To wit, the *Quality* of the *Speaker*, the *Nature* of what is *spoken*, the *Condition* of the *Persons* to whom he *speaks*, and the *Inevitable Destruction* to such as are guilty of a *Refusal*.

§ 4. First consider *who* it is that speaks unto us in the Gospel. 'Tis *He that sitteth between the Cherubims, and covereth himself with Light, as with a Garment. He that inhabiteth Eternity, and dwelleth in that Light which no mortal Eye can approach unto.* He of whom 'tis therefore said by the royal Psalmist, *that Clouds and Darknes are round about him, though righteousness and judgment are the Habitation of his Seat.* He that *stretcheth out the Heavens, and layeth the Foundations of the earth, and formeth the Spirit of man within him.* He that *guards* us with his *Angels*, and that *guides* us by his *Spirit*. He that *protects* us by his *Providence*, and *directs* us by his *Grace*, and that *orders* all he does to *crown* us finally with his *Glory*. In a

Heb. 1. 3.

word, 'tis *God the Father*, that speaks unto us in the Gospel by *God the Son*. And therefore for *this*, if for *no other* reason, so that ye refuse not *Him that speaketh*, because he *speaketh* in the language of *unspeakable Love*, and *unspeakable Humility*. For when as yet we lay *weltring* and *polluted in our Bloud*, how did he *save* us as so many *Brands pluck'd out of the Burning*? how very gladly did he descend from out the *Bosom of the Father*, to bid us *Live*? 'Twas He that descended to be *born*, to make himself capable of *dying*. 'Twas He that *died* for our *sins*, to become capable of *rising* for our *Justification*. 'Twas He that *rose*, and *ascended*, and *sat him down on the right hand of the Throne of Majesty on high*, That there he might *make Intercession* for us; That by the *Gifts* of his *Apostles* whom he *inspir'd* for that *end*, he might cause his holy *Gospel* to be still *Echoing* in our *Ears*; and that by sending his *Holy Spirit* at once to *sanctifie* and *instruct* us, he might place it as a *Signet* upon our *Hearts* too. From whence it follows unavoidably, That if we *miss* of those things which have thus been prepared and purchas'd for us, and shall finally *come short* of the *glory of God*, we cannot say unto *God*, that He hath withheld his good things from us; but

God

God may rather say to us, as heretofore to his People Israel, *Your Iniquities have turned away these things, and your Sins have withholden good things from you.* 'Tis onely the *hardness* of our *Hearts*, and the *Spirit within*, which hardens every thing else that is *without* us. 'Tis That that many times makes *the Heavens Brass* over our heads, and *the Earth Iron* under our feet. 'Tis very certain that on God's part, *nothing* has been wanting to make us *happy*. He came to this end, that we might *receive* him. He spake to this end, that we might *hear* him. Was *lifted up* to this end, that he might *draw us up* after him. And *draws us up* to this end, that he may *seat us* with himself at the *right hand* of God. And if our *hearts* are now such *heavy*, such *unweildy* pieces of *Iron*, or have a mixture of so much *Lead* in their composition, as not to be lifted above the Earth by so strong a *Loadstone*, it does not argue a want on *Christ's* part, of enough *Magnetick Virtue* whereby to *draw* us, but onely a *wilfulness* on *ours*, whereby we gain an *Incapacity* of being *drawn*.

Now for the better overcoming this brutish *fleshlines* of our *Spirits*, let us repeat and reinforce the Consideration we are upon. God the Father speaks to us, by God the Son, what is

Jer. 5. 25.

Deut. 28. 23.

written by the *Suggestion* of God the *Holy Ghost*. There is *nothing* of Human in all the Gospel, besides the *labour* of the *Evangelists*, in committing it to Posterity with *Ink* and *Parchment*, which yet was done by the Conduct of God himself. 'Tis true the *Law* was of God too, but *That* came by \**Moses* ; whereas the Gospel came from him by *Jesus Christ*. *Christ* was sent and a *commission'd* by God the *Father*, as the *Apostles* were *commission'd* and sent by *Christ*. For so he told them at that Instant when he gave them their *Mission* and their *Commission*, (*Joh.20.21.*) *As my Father sent Me, so send I You*. From whence he is called by *S. Paul*, not onely the *high Priest*, but the *Apostle* of our *Profession*, *Heb.3.1.* All the *Twelve* were but *Apostles* of this one great *Apostle*, as well to offer us the Terms of *Peace* and *Pardon*, as to intreat and implore our *Acceptance* of it. Now when God sends *Himself* in a Message to us ; when the *Heavens* are bowed down to imbrace the *Earth* ; when even *Happiness* it self is brought to visit us at our *Houses*, ( which at present are but floating in a *Valley of Tears* ; ) and brought by *Him* who is the *Author* of *Bliss* and *Glory* ; whose Dwelling is not onely *in*, but *above* the *Heavens* ; to whom the *Sun* in his *Zenith* is but a *Shadow*,

\* Joh.1.17.

a Joh.14.10.

Joh.14.10.  
Joh.20.21.

*Shadow*, and the whole *Globe of Earth* but an humble *Footstool*; sure the *least* we can do, is to bid him *welcome*, to give him an *hospitable Reception*, and to *open the Door* of the House within us, at which he is pleas'd to *stand knocking*, and *sue for Entrance*, with a *Behold I stand at the Door and knock, if any man hear my voice, and open the Door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me*, (Rev. 3. 20.) And therefore if ye can afford him *no better cheer*, yet at least *entertain him without Contempt*, never treat him at his coming with a dishonourable *Averseness*, βλέπετε μὴ παροστήσῃτε, *See that ye refuse not him that speaketh.*

How many Miles did men go, in the *beaten World*, to hear but a *Socrates*, or a *Pythagoras*, a *Plato*, or a *Plotinus*? How many Miles went a *Queen*, to hear the *Apophthegms* of *Solomon*? what pains were taken by the *Jews*, to hear the *reading of the Law*? what by *Naaman the Syrian*, to hear the *Counsel of Elisha*, a single *Prophet*? And shall not *God* obtain a hearing, when he speaks to us by his *Son*? and by *such a Son* too, as is *God himself*? Certainly for the hearing of *such a Speaker*, 'twere worth our labour to go to *Him*, although it should cost us a *longer* journey than from *Sheba* to *Jerusalem*; much

\* Rev. 3. 20.

lest should we refuse him, when He (in prevention,) is come to us; when God, to make us his *adopted* Sons, does freely *expose* his *only begotten*; and appoints him the *Speaker*, who is the *Word* too; I mean the *hypostatical eternal Word*. Who yet does *\*stand at our Door*, in a posture of *painfulness* and *humility*, whilst we are *lolling* in his *House*, and perhaps *sitting* at his *Table*. How that the *Dignity* of the *Speaker* should become an *Incitement* to our *Attention*, and *what* attention we ought to give to Him that *speaketh* in the *Gospel*, we may infer from that which *Moses* did once exact under the *Law*. What *Attention* that was, and how he evinc'd the *greatness* of it from the great *Dignity* of the *Speaker*, will best be seen by comparing three passages of Scripture. *Deut. 4. 32, 33. Deut. 6. 6, 7, 8, 9. and Deut. 11. 18, 19, 20.* In the first of which three, *Moses* magnifies the *Privilege* allow'd by God to the People *Israel*, *To hear the voice of God speaking from out the midst of the Fire*. Did ever People hear the like? in any Time? or at any Place? First, for Time, *Ask the days that are past, since the day wherein God created Man upon the earth*. Secondly, for Place, *Ask from the one side of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any such thing*



as *This*, or hath been ever heard like it. In the two next passages, *Moses* strictly enjoyns the People, to addict themselves wholly to the words of *God's Law*; to be conversant with them both *Day* and *Night*; to have them always upon their *Hands*, and in their *Mouthes*, between their *Eyes*, and in their *Hearts*. Whereupon we are to argue à *minori ad majus*. If such attention was to be given to what was spoken onely by *Moses* to all the People, how much more to what is spoken by *Jesus Christ*? for *Christ* was counted worthy of more glory than *Moses*, in as much as He that built the House, hath more honour than the House, (*Heb. 3. 3.*) And by how much a *Son* is above a *Servant*. (*v. 5, 6.*) And therefore if the Words which God had spoken by his *Servant*, much more are the Words which He hath spoken by his *Son*, very fit to be written upon our *Gates*, and our *Door-posts*, to be fixt as *Frontlets* between our *Eyes*, to be set as a *Seal* upon our *Hands*, and as a *Signet* upon our *Hearts*. We ought to teach them unto our *Children*, and to be ruminating on them on all Occasions, in season, out of season, when we sit in our Houses, and when we walk by the way, when we lie down, and when we rise up. And thus we have the first of the four Inforcements,  
by

by which the *Warning* of our *Apostle* may be set home upon our *Souls*.

Deut. 27. 25.  
Gal. 3. 10.

Gen. 22. 2.

§ 5. Secondly, Let us consider, (after the *Quality* of the *Speaker*,) the *Nature* of the *Things* that are *spoken* by him. They are not any such *hard* and *insupportable* sayings, as once were heard from Mount *Ebal*, *Cursed is he that continueth not in all things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them*; no nor such as were spoken long before at *Beersheba*, and to be put in Execution on Mount *Moriab*, *Take now thy Son, thine onely Son whom thou lovest, and offer him for a Burnt-offering, upon one of the Mountains which I shall tell thee of*. No, he does not require of *us* any such *Terrible* Expressions of our Obedience. He commands us to *kill and slay*, not our *Children*, but our *Sins*. And yet our *Sins* are our *Children* too, the *fruit* of our *Bodies* very often, and still the *fruit* of our *Souls*. Nay, many times these ugly *Children*, (I mean our *Sins*,) are *dearer* to us than *Sons* or *Daughters*. (*Agamemnon* found it easier to kill a *Daughter*, than a *Lust*.) But they are *viperous* Darlings we so much doat on; such *miscreant* Children as will *kill* their own *Parents*, if not prevented by being *kill'd*. And these alone are the *Children*, which God requires

us

us to *sacrifice* to his *Displeasure*. Not our *Isaacs*, but our *Ishmaels*, (I mean our *wild*, and *furious*, *illegitimate Off-spring*) are to be *slain*. We must sacrifice our *Dishonesty*, by *doing Justice*; we must sacrifice our *Avarice*, by *shewing Mercy*; and we must sacrifice our *Pride*, by *walking humbly with our God*. Mic.6.8. Well, ye have heard what it is *not*; will ye now know *what it is*, which *God in Christ* doth speak to us? he speaks the *best* and the *happiest* Tidings, that any *wounded* or *broken Spirit* can *hope* or *pray for*. So *God loved the world*, that he gave his *onely begotten Son*, that *whosoever believeth in Him*, should not *perish*, but have *life everlasting*. Joh.3.16. *God sent not his Son into the world*, to *condemn the world*, but that the world *through him might be sav'd*. v.17. *If any man thirst*, let him come unto me and *drink*. Joh.7.37. *He that believeth in me*, there shall flow out of his *Belly*, *Rivers of living water*. v.38. *If a man keep my saying*, he shall never see *Death*. Joh.8.51. *Come unto me all ye that travel and are heavy laden*, and I will give you *rest*. Mat.11.28. And if ye *ask any thing in my name*, I will do it. Joh.14.14. Thus we find *God the Father* speaking to us by his *Son*. Now observe how *God the Son* is speaking to us by his *Servants*. *If any man*

Gen.16.12.

2 King. 5, 10,  
11, 12, 13.

sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is the propitiation for all our sins. 1 Joh. 2. 1. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him, also freely give us all things? Rom. 8. 32. And here I cannot but call to mind what was said unto Naaman the churlish Syrian. Who coming to Elisba to be cured of his Leprosie, was prescribed by the Prophet no harder Medicine than to wash seven times in the River Jordan. When He, being Angry, in stead of Thankfull, ask'd if Abana and Pharpar, Rivers of Damascus, were not better than all the Waters of Israel. An Ingratitude so excellive, that his own Servants took him up, I know not whether with a more melting or a more cutting kind of Rebuke, saying to him, My Father, if the Prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it? how much rather when he saith to thee, wash and be clean? After the very same manner may I say here. If God had sent us a Message by his Arch-Angel Michael, who is said by the Rabbins to be the Messenger of his Justice, and so to bring news of the saddest nature; should we not have entertain'd him as a Messenger from Heaven, with Fear and Reverence? And then, (with a greater force of reason,)

son,) when a Messenger so *glorious*, and one withall so *obliging* is sent unto us, as *God manifest in the flesh*; and sent unto us in *such* a Message, as is not onely *the word of God*, but *the word of Reconciliation*; sure the *least* we can render for so much Mercy, is not onely very *willingly*, but very *thankfully* to receive it. And therefore as for the *former*, so for *this* reason also, βλέπετε μὴ παροργίζετε, See that ye refuse not him that speaketh.

2 Cor. 5. 9.

§ 6. Thirdly, let us consider, (after the *Quality* of the *Speaker*, and the *Nature* of what is *spoken*,) the *Condition* of the *Persons* to whom he speaks. Even to *us* who were *Gentiles*, that had long *sat in Darknes*, and the *shadow of Death*. To *us* who were so *diseased* and *sick* of sin, as that we could not be *cur'd* but by the *Death* of our *Physician*, this *Sun of Righteousness* did arise, with *healing in his Wings*, and *translated us out of Darknes* into his *marvellous light*. We had nothing but *Sin* and *Misery* to make us capable of his *compassion*; and nothing more than his own *compassion* to make us capable of his *Love*. For had he not *lov'd* us whilst we were *loathsome*, and in a state of *Depravation*, he had not *given himself* for *us* to make us *lovely*, that is, to *redeem us from all Iniquity*. And

Mal. 4. 2.

Tit. 2. 14.

since the *hardness* of our *Hearts* was able enough to break *His*, (I mean, to break it) into *compassion*, and *pity* towards us ; shall not the *tenderness* of his Heart be able enough to *melt ours*, (I mean, to *melt* them) into Tears of sincere Repentance ? At *least* it should melt us into so much *good Nature*, as to afford him *willing Ears* when he speaks unto us. You know 'tis *uncivil* for any *Æqual* to *look aside* when another *speaks*. But 'tis *sawciness* in a *Cottager*, to *slight* the *speech* of his noble *Landlord*. 'Tis more than *Insolence* in a *Subject*, not to attend unto the *words* of a *gracious Sovereign*. How great a *Crime* is it (by consequence,) as well as a *clownery* in Religion, either to *laugh*, or *look aside*, or any other ways to express an haughty *Carelessness*, or *Neglect*, when *God himself* in his *Gospel* is speaking to us by his *Son* ? The Men of *Israel* and of *Judah* were *more obnoxious* to Judgment than Those of *Nineve*, both for *slighting His* preaching who was *greater* than *Jonah*, and because they were a People much *more oblig'd*. For as the *better* he is that *speaks*, the *worse* it is, *not to attend* him ; or as the more the *Things spoken* have been *obliging*, the *contempt* of such things is the more *enormous* ; so the *more favours* they have received to whom the *word* of God is *offer'd*,



fer'd, the more *unpardonable* they are on supposition of their *Refusal*. Indeed the *Jews*, and the *Mahomedans*, or the *Salvages* of *America*, may refuse the Lord *Jesus* with some *colour* of *Excuse*. But *we* are capable of *none*, if *we neglect so great Salvation*, when brought unto us by a *Saviour* with whom *from our Birth* we have been *acquainted*, and of whom we know *This*, (by the instruction of *S. Peter*,) that *He alone* *both the words of Eternal Life*. And therefore *whatever* is done by *others*, who are but *Aliens* and *Strangers* to Christianity; yet in remembrance of the *Privilege* and the *Dignity* of your *Vocation*, your having been *washed* in the *laver* of *Baptism*, your having had a *Taste* of the *heavenly gift*, and of the *Powers* of the *world to come*, your being a *chosen generation*, a *royal Priesthood*, an *holy Nation*, a *peculiar People*, which in time past were not a *People*, but are now the *People of God*, which had not once obtained *Mercy*, but have now obtained *Mercy*, βλέπετε μή ποτε ἁμαρτάνετε, *See that ye refuse not him that speaketh*.

Heb. 6. 4, 5.

1 Pet. 2. 9, 10.

§ 7. Last of all, let us consider, (after the *Quality* of the *Speaker*, the excellent *Nature* of what is *spoken*, and the *Condition* of the *Persons* to whom he *speaks*,) the *greater Degrees* of *Condemnation* to such as are *guilty* of a *Refusal*. For

as the *Dignity* of our *Calling* is above that of others, so we find our selves obliged to greater *Duty*. And the more we are *rewardable* for our *Discharge* of such *Duty*, by so much the *greater* is our *Danger*, if we *neglect* it. For the *Gospel* will condemn us to greater misery than the *Law*, upon *that* Supposal. An *injur'd Saviour* will become a most *angry Judge*. And our contempt of *richer Favours* than had been shewn in Times past, will but excite our *Benefactor* to greater *Fury*. Mark (I pray) what it is, which I am now to demonstrate, and press you with, (for what you can *never* enough *remember*, I cannot mind you of too *often*,) That as the *greater Dignities* are *allow'd* us, the *stricter Duties* we are *injoyn'd*; so by how much the *stricter* our *Duties* are, we must needs be obnoxious to *greater Dangers*. To *us* it is given to *know* the *Will* of our Master, and the *Mysteries* of the *Kingdom of Heaven*. Here lies our *Dignity*. But if we *know* his *Will*, we must *do* it too. There lies our *Duty*. For if we *know* it, *but do it not*, *we shall be beaten with many stripes*. Therein consists our greatest *Danger*. 'Tis not the *knowledge* of our *Duties*, but the *living up* to our *knowledge*, which will stand us instead in the *Day of Wrath*. Nay, All we gain by our *Knowledge*,  
ledge,

\*Mat. 13. 11.

a Joh. 13. 17.

b Luk. 12. 47.

ledge, whilst it is destitute of *Practice*, is to be laden with *greater misery* than they that *know nothing at all*. God who spake in *times past* to our *Forefathers* by the *Prophets*, hath in these last days spoken to us by his *Son*. There lies our *Dignity*. But the *times of their Ignorance* God winked at, (saith the Apostle) *who now commandeth all men every where to repent*. There lies our *Duty*, and *Danger* too. For if his *speaking* us by his *Son* exacts to be *answer'd* by our *Repentance*, by so much the *greater* must be our *Misery* if we continue in our *Impenitence*. And then what *Ground* is it of *Comfort*, that God in these last days hath *spoken* to us by his *Son*, (thereby filling us with the *knowledge* of all the *Mysteries* of the *Gospel*,) in case our *Knowledge* is become *barren*, and doth not bring forth the *Fruits* of *Evangelical Integrity*? to wit, impartial *Obedience* to the whole *Law* of *Christ*? To what purpose is our *Knowledge* of all good things, without the sedulous *execution* of what we *know*, when God who hath *spoken* by his *Son*, hath spoken *This* in effect amongst other things, That our present *Guilt* will be the *more*, and our future *Stripes* the more *numerous*? It had been *better* for us, by consequence, He had not spoken to us *at all*, much

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Heb. i. 1, 2.

Joh. 15. 22.

less by his Son, if we shall now stop our Ears against the Voice of this Charmer, or onely open our Ears to him, but not our Hearts. For what said our Lord of the stubborn Jews, upon whom he had bestow'd the *first-fruits* of his *Preaching*, and to whom he had offer'd the *first Refusal* of his Favours? *If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had Sin; but now* (that I am come, and have spoken, and both in vain,) *they have no excuse or colour for Sin.*

After the very same manner, had not God spoken to us *at all*, or had he spoken to us obscurely, (as he spake to the *Gentiles* before the *Law*, by the great *Book* of the *Creation*, the two-fold *Volume* of *heaven* and *earth*,) or had he spoken to us onely by *Dreams*, and *Visions*, by *Urim*, and *Thummim*, by *Types*, and *Figures*, by *Angels*, and *Men*, by whom he spake unto the *Jews* under the *Pædagogic* of *Moses*; we might have alledged in our excuse, (how ineffectually soever) that we either *wholly wanted* the means of *knowledge*, or that the means were much less than they *might* have been. But now since after all *other Methods*, by which he spake to us, and *others*, (and which are written for our *Instruction*,) he hath left to us in *writing* what he spake to us by his Son, thereby *enlightning* our

Heads

*Heads* with an abundant measure of his *Knowledge*, and also hath given us of his *Spirit*, whereby to *warm* our *Hearts* too with a competent measure of his *Grace*; what *Apologie* or *Pretense* are we able to make for our *Inpieties*? We cannot alledge at his Tribunal, That we were ignorant of his *Glory*, and unacquainted with his *Works*; for *\*the heavens declare the Glory of God, and the Firmament sheweth his handy work.* (*Psal.* 19. 1.) We cannot say in that hour, that we were destitute of the *Law*; for He hath *\*written it in our Hearts*. Nor that we wanted his *Gospel*; for He hath put it into our *Ears*. Nor that we were strangers unto his *Name*; for we daily take it into our *Lips*. Nor can we plead that He exacted, *more than 'twas possible* for us to do; for (we know) *a we can do all things through Him that strengthens us.* And he *accepteth according to what we have*, (although it be *but a willing mind*,) where nothing more can be perform'd. *2 Cor.* 8. 12. He accepts the *least Things*, where the *least* are the *greatest* that we can give. *Sincere* we can be, although not *sinless*. Let us but be what we *can*, and be *perfectly willing* to be what we can *not*; that is, let us be *perfect* as it is *possible* for us to be, and *perfectly willing* to be perfect *\*as our Father*

*\* Quicquid humano aspectui subicitur, Templum ejus vocavit qui solam mente conspicitur, ut qui hac veneratur ut Templum, cultum tamen maximum debeat Conditore; sciatque quisque in usum Templi hujus inducitur, ritu sibi vivendum Sacerdotum. Macrobius.*

*\* Rom.* 10. 6, 7, 8.  
*a Philip.* 3. 13.

*\* Matth.* 5. 48.

in Heaven ; and then we have that *willing mind*, which S. *Paul* doth assure us will be *accepted*.

But here I would not be so *mistaken*, (by such as *love* to be *misled* into *pleasant Errors*,) as if I had hinted that the *Will* is still as good as the *Deed* ; or that if we are desirous to *do* our Duties, *and do them not*, it will certainly *serve* our turn, as well as if *we had* done them. The *Apostle* does not so speak, and I onely speak with the *Apostle* ; whose words to the *Corinthians* are plainly These. *If there be first a willing mind, God accepteth according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not*. Which is as if he should have said, God will not punish any man living who does *as much* as he is *able*, for the *not doing* of That, which 'tis *impossible* for him to *do*. From whence 'tis obvious to infer, *not* that any man may *presume* upon God's acceptance of his *Will*, or his *woulding* rather, without the *performance* of his Duty, when he is able to *perform* as well as *will* it ; ( for this were to justify our *wilfullest*, which are our very *worst* sins ; ) but that when we have in earnest done the *greatest* good we *can*, God accepts of our *willingness* to do the good we *can not*. Being *as good* as we are able, he will not be angry we are



are no better. When he finds us *sincere* in all our Services, he will not condemn us for *not* being *sinless*. But notwithstanding *all This*, which is indeed for our *Comfort*, It is every whit as *true*, and for our *Humiliation*, that we shall be utterly *unexcusable* at the last great Audit, (*in the day when God shall judge the Secrets of men by Jesus Christ,*) in case we so far *refuse Him that speaks to us from Heaven*, as live no more strictly with all the Advantages of the Gospel, than the *Jews* and the *Gentiles* who liv'd without them.

First, from the *Gentiles*, 'tis argued Thus by *S. Paul*. If *They* were left without excuse, who had *no other* Scripture than the great *Book of Hieroglyphicks*, the double *System* of the *Creatures* in Heaven and Earth; and had *no other Light*, than that of *Reason* whereby to read it; and had no *Law* to go by, but That of *Nature*; and had no where else to *see* it, but in the *Tables* of their *Hearts*; and where 'twas written in no *Characters*, but what were *Invisible* to their *Eyes*; then what excuse can *We* hope for, whom God hath spoken to by his Son? (and who, besides the *Light of Nature*, have All the *Instruments of Grace* too,) if *We* shall sin against the light of so clear a *Knowledge*? 'Tis very plain

Rom. i. 19,  
20, 21.

that we *Christians* may be *less excusable* than the *Gentiles*, who (many of them) *never heard of the Name of Christ*, and yet for all that were *unexcusable*.

Secondly, from the *Jews*, we find our *Author* to the *Hebrews* disputing thus, *Heb. 10. 28, 29.* If he that *despised Moses Law* died without mercy, under two or three *Witnesses*; *πῶς χείρονα πώμας*, Of how much sorer Punishment shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the *Son of God*? And He is reckon'd to be the Man that hath trodden under foot the *Son of God*, whoever he is that *sinneth wilfully*, after he hath received the knowledge of the *Truth*. (v. 26.) For if then we sin wilfully, there remaineth no more sacrifice or expiation for sins; but a certain fearful looking for of Judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the *Adversaries*. (v. 27.) The confirmation of this we have *Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6.* where 'tis affirm'd to be impossible for them that once have been *inlightned*, and have tasted of the good word of God, if They fall away, to be renewed unto Repentance. And the reason there is, because (in God's interpretation) they crucify to themselves the *Son of God*, and put him to an open shame. This again is confirm'd by *2 Pet. 2. 20, 21.* where the *End of relapsed Christians*

is said to be worse than the Beginning. And thence 'tis inferred to be better, never to have known the way of Truth, than after they have known it to turn, &c. Thus you see how the *Jews* might be *less excusable* than the *Gentiles*, and yet how *We* who are *Christians* may be *less excusable* than the *Jews*. And therefore let us look to it, *that we refuse not him that speaketh*, but rather that we make him some *proportionable Answer*; speaking back to him *better*, than by our *Sins*, to wit, by *Repentance*, and *change of Life*. For if *They escaped not who refused Him that spake on earth*, much less shall we, if we turn away from *Him that speaketh from heaven*.

§ 8. I do insist so much the rather upon this *fourth* and *last* Topick, from which the *Caveat* or *Warning* is now *inforc'd*, because the *hope of Reward* in a world to come, is *less available* with men than the *fear of Punishment*; and because the *Holy Ghost* does seem to *prefer* this way of arguing, not onely in my *Text*, but in diverse *other* places of *this Epistle*. In the *second Chapter* more especially, (at the *first*, *second*, *third*, and *fourth Verses*,) we find the *Argument* and the *Inference* to be much the same that they are *here*. First of all observe the *Argument*, and especially the *Topick* from which

'tis drawn. If the word spoken by *Angels* was stedfast, and every *Transgression* and *Disobedience* received a just recompence of reward, *ἡ δὲ χάρις ἡμῶν*, How shall we then escape, if we neglect so great *Salvation*, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him, God also bearing them witness both with *Signs* and *Wonders*, and diverse *Miracles*, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will? which is as much as to say, That because *Christ* was superiour both to *Moses* and to the *Angels*, by the ministry of whom the *Law* was spoken unto the *Jews*, therefore we who are *Christians* are bound to yield the greater reverence to That which *God* in the *Gospel* hath spoken to us by his *Son*. For if the *Israelites* were plagu'd for their contempt of the *Law*, much more shall we *Christians* for our *Neglect* of the *Gospel*.

§ 9. What now is the *Use* we are to make of this *Doctrine*, or what the *Inference* to be drawn from this *Argument*? Is it onely in the *negative*, That we refuse not him that speaketh? or that we have not any *Averseness* to his *Person* or his *Words*? no, a man may be *indifferent*, without *averseness*; he may be *cold* and *unattentive* to what is spoken, without an absolute

Con-

Contempt, or Refusal of it. And therefore the Inference is so plainly and so positively express'd, as to be utterly exclusive of all Indifference. 'Tis δὲ ἡμᾶς προνοήτως προειχέν, *We ought to give the more earnest heed unto the things that we have heard*; and that for this reason, *lest at any time we let them slip*. The Apostle's word is, μὴ ποτε παραφύωμεν, a Metaphor taken from the falling away of Water, when being not kept within its Bounds it runs wastfully about, and so is spilt upon the ground, as Phavorinus and Hesychius do both expound it. A Metaphor the fitter, and the more worthy to be consider'd, because the word of God in Scripture is compar'd and resembled to those three Liquids, Wine, Milk, and Water. To the first, by *Isaias*; to the second, by *S. Peter*; and by *S. John* unto the third. We must be therefore very carefull, as well to retain, as to receive the Wine and Milk of the word, and as it were to bottle up the Water of Life, (as *David* prays God to do his Tears,) lest at any time we shed it, or let it fall. For there is no Cordial Water, which we are not carefull to preserve; (be it but Cinnamon, or Surfet Water.) Nor is there any wholesome Milk, which we think not too good to be cast away; (be it but a Cow's, or an Ass's Milk.) Nor

Heb. 2.1.

Isa. 55.1.  
1 Pet. 2.2.  
Rev. 22.1, 17.

1 Cor. 10. 4.

Rev. 7. 17.  
21. 6.

2 Cor. 4. 7.

Nor is there any want of heed to keep our *Wine* from being *lost*, although it be made of a *common Grape*. But since the *Wine* I now speak of is that that *flow'd* from *his Mouth*, who call'd himself *the True Vine*; And since the *Milk* is none other, than the *sincere Milk of the word*; And since the *Water* is no less *pretious*, than the *Water of Life*, a *Water flowing out from Him* whom *S. Paul* calls a *Rock*, from whence there gushes out a *Fountain of living Water*; sure we ought to be *studious* and *carefull* of it, more than of any thing in the world which is committed to be kept in *our earthen Vessels*. Δὲ ὡς ἔχουσιν περισσεύειν, we ought to give the *more abundant and earnest heed* to the word of God which we have heard, (that *Wine*, that *Milk*, that *Water of Life*, which we have *drank* out of the *Gospel*, and have imbib'd into our *Ears*,) whereby our *Souls* may be *nourished* to *Life Eternal*.

Yet there are *multitudes* in the *world*, I mean in our *Christian Reformed* world, (upon whom what I have said must needs reflect very severely,) who are so *cold*, and so *careless* in *reading* or *hearing* the word of God, that there is hardly any thing else to which they are not *much more attentive*. If a *Mountebank* in the *Street* shall speak



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peak to the People from a *Scaffold*, they will presently flock to him, and give him *Audience*. If any *Revels* are to be kept, or a new *Comædy* to be acted, the *Souls* of men will be *running out* at their *Eyes* and *Ears*, through the *great* and *earnest heed* which they will give unto the things that are *said* or *done*. If a *Tertullus* or an *Herod* shall make an eloquent Oration, his Auditors will be apt to cry aloud with those *Parasites*, (*Act. 12. 22.*) *it is the voice of a God, and not of a Man*. Whereas when one of *Christ's Sermons* is recited out of the *Gospel*, the hearers are commonly as *indifferent*, and as seemingly *unconcern'd*, as if they said inwardly in their hearts, (*the flat Reverse* of what was said of the Speech of *Herod*,) *it is the word of a Man, and not of a God*. Do They give heed to what they hear, who if they are not quite *asleep*, are yet so *yawningly attentive*, as to *forget* in an *Instant*, what they *hear* in an *hour*? No, did they heed the *word of God*, as they often do the *actions* and *words of Men*, (*if not in real admiration*, at least in *flattery*,) they would carry what they learn from *this Year* unto the *next*; not in *utramque aurem dormire*, or at least in *duarum alteram*, letting out at the *right Ear* what they receive into the *left*; as if they purposed to con-

Heb. 4. 12.

Rom. 1. 16.

*fute this Epistle to the Hebrews, when it saith in another place, that the word of God is quick, and powerfull, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing of Soul and Spirit; or had a mind to enervate that saying of S. Paul, as to their Particulars, That the Gospel of Christ is the Power of God unto Salvation.*

§ 10. What may probably be the reason, why men will sleep at a *Sermon*, a great deal sooner than at a *Play*? is it not because they are less attentive, and by consequence less delighted to be in the *Church* than in the *Theater*, and by consequence more in love with what is meant onely to please, than with what is meant to profit them to Life Eternal? Or suppose them most delighted in Church-Assemblies. What then may be the reason, why they are much more attentive to the words of Men out of the *Pulpit*, than to the word of God out of the *Pew*? Is it not that they prefer the gratification of the Ear to the Rectification of the Heart? And why should that be, if not for want of true Belief, or else of due Consideration, that the *Old and New Testament* are God's own word? and that the *Gospel* in particular is the word which God the Father hath spoken to us by God the Son? And

And why should *this* be so little *beeded*, (if 'tis really *believ'd*) unless because it is so *cheaply*, and so *commonly* to be had? were the *Sun* to be seen but *once* or *twice* in the Year, he would be much more *consider'd* than now he is; it being the *commonneß* of his *Shining* which makes him pass over our heads so *unregarded*. And as it is with the *Works*, so is it too with the *Word* of God. For in the *Infancy* of the Church, before *printing* was *invented*, what *care* and *cost* were men at, to write out Copies of the *Gospel*? and in what *honour* was it had, when *but newly* to be had in the *Vulgar Tongues*? whereas now that it is grown both *cheap*, and *common*, it is commonly as *Pearl* cast out to *Swine*. Many sit not at *ease*, whilst the Priest is in the reading of *Psalms* and *Chapters*; and many *loyter* without the *Church*, until they are very well assur'd the Preacher is going into the *Pulpit*; not at all laying to heart, (what yet they cannot but assent to, if ever it enters into their Heads whilst their Heads are *Christian*;) that the chiefest part of God's Service hath been performed in the *Pew*. For the most powerfull *words* of Men can but *edifie* at the best, whereas the pure *word* of God is apt to *sanctifie* and \**cleanse* us, *Joh. 17.* 17. and as S. Peter once said to the *Jewish Sa-*

\* Joh. 15. 3.

Act. 5. 29.

*nedrim*, we ought to obey God rather than Man. So in this Case also, we ought to *hear* God rather than Men. Now the Lesson which is read out of the *Law* and the Prophets is the very *word* of God which he hath spoken by his *Servants*. And so the Lesson out of the *Gospel* is the very *word* of God which he hath spoken by his *Son*. Whereas the customary *Discourse* which we call a *Sermon*, though it is *profitable*, and *pious*, and therefore *worthy* of all *acceptance*; yet 'tis of *human Contrivance* and *Composition*, if it is not all taken, *word for word*, out of the *Scripture*; and if it is, it is no more, than so much *Scripture* as fills an *hour*. And how far it is from That, our own experience may inform us from several *Pulpits*; wherein we are often entertain'd with accurate *Essays*, and *Harangues*, with florid *Discourses*, and *Declamations*, which have a very strong favour of *Art*, and *Diligence*, and are deservedly applauded for *Wit*, and *Learning*; but are so far from being *drawn* from the *Well* of *Life*, so far from being *wholly made*, or *mostly deduced* out of *Scripture*, as to have hardly any *Tincture* or *Relish* of it. As if their Authors were afraid, with *Cardinal Bembus* and other *Romanists*, (who are complain'd of and accus'd by *Dominicus*

Hottinger. de  
Necessit. Re-  
form. p. 21,  
22.

*nicus Nanus Mirabellius,*) to sully and flatten their Elocution with *the Oracles of God*. As if they had the same opinion touching the *Language of the Pulpit*, with the *Prophane Cardinal Hosius* touching the *wellfare of the Church*. when he said *it had been better if no Gospel had been written*. As if the *Scripture* had seem'd to *Them*, what once it did to *S.\* Austin* before he was *absolutely converted*, very *unworthy to be compar'd with Cicero's Elegance of Expression*. I wish we might not complain of *some*, who are call'd to be *Preachers of the Gospel*, as *Laurentius Valla* was said to do of *Cardinal Sadolet*, and *Politian*, and other Orators of their Age, *Gentilem illos Sermonem magis, quàm Ecclesiasticum deamasse*, That they have rather lov'd an *Ethnical*, than *Ecclesiastical* way of speaking. And yet if in a zealous *Enmity* to such affected *Idolizers of human Eloquence*, the Preacher frames his *whole Sermon*, word for word, out of the *Scripture*; what is *This* but the *Recital* of so much *Scripture* as fills an *Hour*? And then 'tis certainly as regardable, when barely read out of the *Pew*, as when with *Emphasis* and *gesture* it is *rehearsed* out of the *Pulpit*.

§ 11. *Refuse not* therefore him that speaketh, upon any *Pretense* to be imagin'd. Not for

\* Cum attendi ad illam scripturam, visa est mihi indigna quam Tulliane Dignitati compararem. Tumor enim meus refugiebat modum ejus, &c. Augustin. Confess. l. 3. c. 5. p. 60.

\* See Mr. Robert Boyle his third Edition of Considerations touching the stile of the Holy Scriptures. p. 4.

the *meanness* of the *Person* by whom he speaks. Not for the *Plainness* of the language in which he speaks. Not for the *Hardness* or mysteriousness of the *things* that are spoken by him. Not for the *cheapness* or the *commonness* of what he speaks. Nor yet for any other Objections, which some who are wittily profane are wont to urge against the Scriptures. For I suppose it to be true, because I find it in the writings of an honourable Author, *That* <sup>\*some of those who do</sup> *acknowledge both the Truth, and the Authority, do find I know not how many faults with the stile of Scripture*; As that it is *too obscure, and immethodical, and contradicting to it self; incoherent, and unadorn'd, flat, and unaffecting*; abounding with things that are either *trivial, or impertinent*, and also with *useless Repetitions*. Monsters more prodigious than any *Africa* can afford us, who *acknowledging the Authority and Truth* of Scripture, can so blasphemously *detract* from the *Credit* of it.

§ 12. But βλέπετε μὴ παροργίζετε, *See that ye refuse not him that speaketh*, for all the scandalous Aspersions, that either the *Wit* or the *Malice of Men* or *Devils* shall at any time contrive to be cast upon him in his Word. And First, refuse not him that speaketh, for the *meanness*

of



of the *Person* by whom he speaks. The word of *God* being as *sacred* when pronounced by the Mouth of the lowest *Priest*, as when by That of the profoundest and greatest *Prelate* in the Church. Nay his word being as *pure* out of a *vitious* man's Lips, as the *Beams* of the *Sun*, when daily *reflected* from a *Dunghill*; or as the *most uncorrupted* and limpid *Water*, when it is running through a *sordid* and *earthy Channel*. As the *Blessing* of *God* to *Israel* was not the *worse* or the *less welcome*, for proceeding from the Lips of a cursed *Balaam*; so his *Rebuke* sent to *Balaam* was not the less to be attended, for being spoken by the Mouth of an *arrant Ass*. Be not therefore as *impatient* of being spoken to by a *Priest* of the poorest *Talent* and *Degree*, as *Nabal* was of being spoken to by a *persecuted*, and *desitute*, but *royal Prophet*; nor so impatient of a *Reproof* from any the *meanest* of *God's* Embassadors, as *Abner* from *Ishbosheth*, or as *Herod* from *John the Baptist*, or as *Ahab* from *Micaiah*, who for speaking an *unpleasant*, but *wholsome Truth*, was presently clapt up in *Prison*, and fed with the *Bread of Affliction* too. Entertain not the *vilest* of all *Christ's Messengers*, as the *Pharisees* and the *Rulers* did *Christ Himself*, when they did *expulse* *him*, *deride* and

*scoff*

1 Sam. 25. 3,  
10, 17.

2 Sam. 3. 7, 8.

1 King. 22.  
27.

Luk. 16. 14.  
ch. 23. v. 35,  
36.

scoff at him for the *despicable* Garb of his *Appearance*. But be as civil to him at least, as ye would that your *Equals* should be to *You*; and even because ye are unwilling to have your *Messengers refus'd*, for being sent by the *basest* of all your *Servants*, therefore *See that ye refuse not him that speaketh*, for the *meanneß* of the *Person* by whom he speaks.

§ 13. Secondly do not *refuse* him, for the *plainneß* of the *Language* in which he speaks. For what is *Plainneß*, but *Perspicuity*? and of all those *Virtues* which are required in an *Orator*, *Perspicuity* and *Pertinence* are worthily reckon'd amongst the *chief*. So far forth as the *Scriptures* contain a *Covenant*, and a *Law*, the one of *Works*, and the other of *Faith*, (That delivered by *Moses*, and This by *Christ*,) there is nothing more becomes the *State* and *Majesty* of its *Author*, than to communicate with his People in greatest *Plainneß*. Or is the *Gospel* very destitute of what the world calls *Wit* and *Eloquence*? call to mind that *God the Father* hath sent it to us by *God the Son*; and pay an humble *Veneration* to what is *spoken*, for the honour you bear unto Him that *speaks*. And since his words are *the words of Eternal Life*, (that is, the *words of Direction* by our *Confor-*  
*mity*

Intendi ani-  
mum in Scri-  
pturas sanctas  
ut viderem  
quales essent.  
Et ecce video  
Rem non com-  
pertam super-  
bis, neque nu-  
datam Pue-  
ri, sed inces-  
su humilem, suc-  
cessu excel-  
sam, & vela-  
tam mysteriis,  
& non eram  
ego talis ut  
intrare pos-  
sem, aut incli-  
nare Cervi-  
cem ad ejus  
gressus. Au-  
gustin. in  
Confess. l. 3.  
c. 5. p. 60.

mity to which we shall live for ever,) of what a barbarous ingratitude shall we be judged to be guilty, if we shall quarrel at his Care to have their meaning understood? Besides, it ought to be remembered, that there are *Parables* in the Scripture, as well as *Plainnesses of Speech*; Places so deep, that an *Elephant* may swim, as well as Places so shallow, that a *Lamb* may wade through them. There are some such \* δυσνόητα, things so difficult and hard to be understood, as that the *Ignorant and unstable* (who are *arrogant*, and *proud*, as well as *empty*;) do many times wrest them to their *Damnation*. And therefore whatsoever else may be the colour for your Refusal, See that ye refuse not an heavenly Speaker, for the *Plainness* of the *Dialect* in which he speaks; because, of all his *Condescensions* expressed to us in his word, this must certainly be one of the most *Obliging*. And yet

\* 2 Pet. 3. 16.

§ 14. Thirdly, do not refuse him, for the *mysteriousness* of the things that are spoken by him. For what were this but to find fault with the *sublimity* of the *matter*? and implicitly to complain, that there is *strong meat* for men of the *ripest Age*, as well as *Milk* for those *Babes* who are *unskilfull in the word of righteousness*? It were to quarrel with the Scripture for having

Heb. 5. 13, 14.

\* 1 Cor 4 1.

Luk. 11. 52.

Mal. 2. 7.

any thing in it whereby to exercise our *Diligence*, and crown our *Search*, to make us sensible of our *weakness*, and to excite our *Admiration*. Besides, it ought to be consider'd, that as there are *Mysteries* in the Scripture, so there are *\* Stewards* of those mysteries. As things lock'd up from low and vulgar Apprehensions, so there are also special men to whom is committed the *Key of Knowledge*. The *Priest's Lips* are to preserve it, and the *People* are to seek it flowing out in expositions from his *Orthodox mouth*. 'Tis fit the Scripture should be *plain*, and *mysterious* too; I mean in several parts of it, for several purposes and ends. For if nothing in it were *plain*, we should but grope after heaven, and miss the way too. And yet if nothing were *mysterious*, its over great *Familiarity* would make it liable to *contempt*. Whereas the due consideration of both together will discover to us the *Use* and the *End* of Sermons. For though it is not perhaps the *pleasant'st*, yet it may seem to be the *best*, because the *profitablest* Preaching in all the World, onely to read, and expound, and apply the Scripture; to shew the *sense*, where it is difficult, and the *use*, when it is easie. And therefore See that ye refuse not him that speaketh, for the *hardness* of the things that are spoken by him.

§ 15. Fourth-

§ 15. Fourthly, do not *refuse* him, for the cheapneß or the commonneß of what he speaks. For *this* were just as extravagant, as if a man should *disesteem* and *depretiate* the worth of the *New Jerusalem*, because the very *Foundations* of the wall of the City were adorn'd with all manner of pretious Stones; and so common a thing was *Pearl*, that the *Gates* of the City consisted of it; and so cheap was pure *Gold*, that the street of the City was *nothing else*. To slight the means of *Salvation* for being commonly to be bad, is just as if a *Nice* person should die with *Thirst*, rather than quench it with common *VVa-ter*. Or as if a *proud* person should scorn his life, for depending upon so cheap and so common an Element as the *Air*. There is nothing more *destructive* and *dishonourable* to men, than their *Itching* after things that are rare and novel. This was one of those Crimes wherewith God *upbraided* his People *Israel*, That *forsaking* him the old and the *living Fountain*, they had *bewn* unto themselves such *broken Cisterns*, as had nothing but *newneß* to recommend them. And therefore such Men and Women are very sharply to be *rebuk'd*, (as *S. Paul* chargeth *Timothy* in the very same Case,) who *not enduring* sound Doctrin, for being old, do *turn aside* unto

Rev. 21. 19,  
21.

2 Pet. 4. 3, 4.

11a. 55. 1.

*Fables*, for being *new*; and still are heaping up *Teachers*, not to work upon their *Hearts*, but to gratifie their delicate and prurient *Ears*. Choosing rather to *quench* their *Thirst* out of every *new Ditch*, than to satisfie themselves with the *Antient Springs*. And therefore if ye do not think, that *the Antient of days* is the *less* to be valued for being *antient*, to wit, *the Lamb slain from the Foundations of the world*; or that the *Waters of Life eternal* do lose their *Virtue* with their *credit* by being *cheap*, by being *easily* to be *had*, *without Money*, and *without Price*; See that ye refuse not him that speaketh, for the *commonness* of the things that are spoken by him.

§ 16. Last of all do not *refuse* him in case his words shall sometimes seem to be *incoherent*, *immethodical*, *contradicting to themselves*, *unaffecting*, or *impertinent*, or clog'd with *useless Repetitions*. For first *at most* they can but seem to be such and such, as the *Sun* does onely seem to be *deform'd* in an *Eclipse*, and *no bigger* than a *Bushel* in his *Meridian*; Next, they cannot so much as seem so to labour with Defects, unless it be through our *Defects* of *Understanding*, or of *Humility*, of competent *Industry*, or *Art*, sufficient *Time* to *converse with*, or *Patience* to *consider* the things we read.

§ 17. In



§ 17. In a word, as we desire that we may never be refused by God Almighty, when at any time we shall speak, or cry to Him in our Distress, whether by Prayers, or Tears, from a Gallows or from a Rack, perhaps out of a Prison, perhaps out of a Pest-house, out of the Belly of a Leviathan, or (which at least is as terrible) out of the Bores of a sinking and dying Ship, (for we know not what end may await us all;) I say, as ever we hope to be heard our selves, when in any kind of Exigence we speak to God, let us at least give God the bearing, when in any kind of Distress he speaks to Us. Be it by his Son, or by his Servants, be it by Precept, or by Example, by Life, or Doctrine, by Exhortations, or Admonitions, by Promises, or Threats, by his Prophet, or by his Rod, by Words, or Blows. And be it by whatsoever Instrument the Blessings of God are laid on; by War, Pestilence, Fire, or Famine. The first of which is now consuming our valiant Country-men abroad; The second (you know) hath been devouring far and wide here at home; The third hath lately laid waste the goodliest Empory in the world, by having us'd our Great City, as once the Cities of the Plain: And unless our Repentance or change of Life, shall cry as loud in God's Ears

"Οὐ καὶ θεὸς  
ἐμπείδη,  
μᾶλα τ' ἐκ-  
λυσεν αὐτὸν.  
Homer. Il. α.

as our *Sins* have done, we know not how soon we may feel the *Fourth*. *Less* than which I cannot say to the *most considering* Congregation; and if *this little* be laid to heart, I think I need not say *more*.

Committing therefore what I have said to due and serious Consideration, I shut up all with That Prayer which is the fittest to compleat and conclude the *Sermon*:

*That what we have heard at this time with our outward Ears, may by the powerfull Grace of God, be so grafted inwardly in our Hearts, as to bring forth in us the fruit of good Living; to the Honour and Praise of his Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. To whom, with the Father, in the unity of the Spirit, be Glory, and Thanksgiving both now and for ever. Amen.*

# THE APPENDIX.

§. I. **O**Ur steddy Adherence or Assent to the *Two last* Articles of the Creed, (and indeed to the other *Ten*,) cannot possibly subsist without our Assent unto the *First*. We cannot certainly believe that *we shall rise from the Dead*, unless it be by believing that *Christ is risen*. And as little can we believe that *Christ is risen*, unless it be by believing first, *that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself*. This implies and presupposes the *First* Article of our Creed, which is as well the *Foundation* as the *Support* of all the Rest. But since the breaking loose of Hell in This last Age of a loathsome World, we have met with such *Enemies* (not onely to *ours*, but) to *All Religion*, as from their *wishing and wouling* there were no God, (no Resurrection of the Body, no life after Death, no Day of Judgment,) have proceeded so far, as to say, and teach, *There is no God*; nor any one of those Things which have been regularly *built upon This Foundation*.  
And

And if we suffer This *Foundation* to be either undermin'd, or but *shaken* in us, All the *Fa-  
brick* of our *Faith* will fall to nothing in an  
Instant. An Error *here* is like one in the *first*  
Concoction, which cannot be mended in the  
*second*. If we do not believe in *God*, [ the *first*  
Article of our Creed,] we cannot choose but be  
*Infidels* in *All* that follow. Nor are we onely  
to *believe* him, as *Belief* is opposed unto a *com-  
prehensive* knowledge; But we must *knowingly*  
believe him, as *Belief* is consistent with know-  
ledge meerly *Apprehensive*. And so as to say  
with as much Truth, as *S. Paul* to *Timothy*,  
( every man for himself, in whatsoever Tempta-  
tions and Times of Trial,)

2 Tim. 2. 12.

*For I know whom I have believed.*

§ 2. A Text which serves well for a double  
purpose; to ascertain our *Knowledge*, and to  
establish our *Belief*, as well as to shew the just  
*measure*, and *use* of Both in our Religion. A  
Text accordingly to be consider'd, not one-  
ly in its *Relative*, but in its *Absolute* impor-  
tance.

First, the words in their Relation to Those  
that *follow* and go *before* them, will be most ea-  
sily understood by being paraphrased Thus. I  
am a *Preacher*, and an *Apostle*, and therefore

now

now a \*Prisoner of Jesus Christ. Even for *this*  
*very cause* of my being sent forth by <sup>a</sup>the Will of  
 God, and made a <sup>b</sup>Teacher of the Gentiles, I  
 suffer these Bonds and Persecutions of the Jews.  
 But I am not ashamed of my Bonds, or Office;  
 I am not sorry for my Preaching, though 'tis the  
 Cause of my Imprisonment. For He on whom  
 I have depended will never forsake me, I am  
 sure. In His hands I can with chearfulness re-  
 pose my Life, by whom my Death will be a  
 Door to my Resurrection. For I have not believ'd  
 I know not whom. Nor do I *nakedly believe*,  
 whom I love, and adore, and rely upon; but  
 I perfectly Know whom I have believed; and  
 have a plenitude of Perswasion, that He for whom  
 I now suffer will never fail me, on Him my Cares  
 are all cast, who careth for me. With Him I have  
 intrusted the whole Depositum of my Labours  
 in the preaching of the Gospel, and the De-  
 positum of my Sufferings for having preach'd it.  
 And whatsoever I have intrusted, or shall in-  
 trust to His keeping, be it my Body, or my Soul,  
 my Body in Peace, or my Soul in Patience, I  
 am assur'd he is Able, and am perswaded he is  
 Willing, to lay it up for me against That Day.  
 A Day expressed to us in Scripture by such Pe-  
 riphrales as These. The Day wherein the Lord

\* v. 2.

a v. 1.

b v. 11.

D d d

Jesus

\* Mal. 3. 16,  
17.

*Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels in flaming Fire. The Day where- in God shall judge the Secrets of men by Jesus Christ. The Day when all that are in the Grave shall bear his Voice, and come forth. The Day of Discrimination when He will make up his \* Jewels, and a Book of Remembrance shall lie be- fore him, for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his Name. All my Concerns are left with Him, who will keep them in safety against That Day. Thus lies the Text in its re- lation to the Context.*

§ 3. But being consider'd in it self, and with- out such Relation, 'twill be as easily understood by this other Paraphrase. I know Him perfectly, as to his Being, whom I believe as to his Es- sence: or whom, as to his Essence, I know in part onely. I can demonstrate his Existence, although I can but most firmly believe his Word. For at one and the same time, as also in one and the same respect, I cannot know, and believe him too; because what I know, I do more than believe, or am past believing: And what I do but believe, I have not yet attained the know- ledge of. Knowledge and Belief do move in two distinct Spheres, and That of Knowledge is so much higher, than This of Faith, that 'tis the



the *Perfection* of a man's *Faith*, wholly to *perish*, and *expire*; to be *drown'd*, and *swallow'd up* into perfect *Knowledge*. St. Paul expresseth his *Believing* by his *knowing in part*. And the Top of his comfort does stand in This, *that when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away*. Here we can but see *darkly, as through a glass*; but the time is now coming when we shall see *face to face*. Here we onely can *Believe* the *Three Subsistences* of the Godhead in but *one and the same Substance*; whereas in *That Day* of Revelation and Restitution, we shall *Know* this great *Mystery even as also we are Known*. Here we can but *Believe* the Resurrection of our Bodies; but (in the great Day of Recompence) our Fruition and Experience will make us *Know* it. We do not know more exactly that *Five and Five* do make *Ten*, or that a *part* of any Dimension is unequal to the *whole*, than we do *Know* and can *demonstrate* (against the Enemies of a Deity) the uncontrollable existence of the Deity we adore. But This I say onely of God's *Existence*, and of his *Essence* onely *in part*. For in our deepest Contemplation of certain *Mysteries* in our Religion, such as a *Trinity* of the *Persons* in the *Unity* of the *Godhead*; the *Generation* of the *Se-*

1 Cor. 13. 9.

10.

12.

*cond*, the *Proceſſion* of the *Third*, and yet the *Coeffentiality* of Both-together with the *First*; I ſay, in *This* contemplation our *Childiſh underſtandings* become ſo *froward*, they cannot be quieted but by *Faith*. Our firm *Belief* of God's *Word* can alone *rock* them into a *ſleep*. In the mean time 'tis matter to us of unſpeakable *Comfort*, that by our *absolute Knowledge* of His *Verity*, and by our ſtedfaſt *Belief* of His *Veracity*, we can eaſily *acknowledge* the higheſt *Mysteries* in the *Godhead*, which in propriety of *Speech* we cannot yet pretend to a *Knowledge of*. All we can do is to *believe*, that *God was in Chriſt reconciling the World unto Himſelf*; but that a *God of Heaven* there *is*, and that a *God* there *muſt* be, and that *God* is a *Spirit*, and that *God* being a *Spirit* muſt needs be *infinite*, *indivisible*, *from everlaſting to everlaſting*, and *ſelf-ſubſiſting*: *Theſe* are things we do clearly *Know*. *Theſe* are things we can prove by ſuch cogent *Reasonings*, as every *Skeptick* will *ſubmit* to, and *Malice* it ſelf cannot *reſiſt*. And ſo 'tis no *Contradiction* (whate're it ſeems at firſt hearing) to ſay, *We Know whom we have Believed*.

§ 4. Now out of this *twofold* *Expoſition* of the *Text*, as well conſider'd in its *absolute*, as in its *relative* importance, a *threefold*

*fold Quære* does arise, and offer it self to be *resolv'd*.

The first Quære is, How and Why we are said to *know* God, by knowledge *properly so call'd*; to wit, as *perfectly*, and as *plainly*, as we can know *any thing else*; or as *fully*, and as *clearly*, as any thing *knowable* can be *known*.

The second is, How and Why our *bare Believing* the *hidden Things* of our God, (as the Scripture calls them) is much more *proper*, and more *requir'd*, and more *rewardable* in Religion, than our clear and full *Knowledge* of God's *Existence*. Nor onely of his *Existence*, but of his *Essence* also *in part*.

The third Quære is, What are the *Powers* and the *Effects*, and the great *Benefits* of *Believing*, (as well as of *knowing* whom we believe,) clearly implied in the Text by the Causal *For*, as That imports *S. Paul's* Reason, for *his not being asham'd of the things he suffer'd*.

A Resolution of the First, will have an aptitude to *shame* or *convince* the *Atheist*.

A Resolution of the Second, will have a Tendency to the *Conversion*, or the *Confusion* of the *Infidel*.

A Resolution of the Third, will dit the Mouthes of those *Scoffers*, who seek to set up

meer Science, (and Science *falsly so call'd*), not onely *above*, but *against Religion*. Nor will it be an ill Office, to make the Sciolists asham'd of their Profanations.

§ 5. Touching the *First* of these Subjects I speak the rather, (though 'tis pity 'tis not impertinent in any Auditory of Christians,) because I have met with an *Objection*, which some have pretended to have had from several eminent men's Writings; to wit, that the *Being* of a *Deity* cannot possibly be proved by *Demonstration*, whereby to be the *Object* of *real Knowledge*; but onely by *Probable Argumentations*, which cannot possibly be effective of any thing greater than our *Belief*. And Humane *Belief* may be *erroneous*, though *Knowledge* cannot. Now whilst I consider that such *Belief* is but a stronger sort of *Opinion*, and that a *Radical Fear* at least (in Books of Logick and Philosophy) is affirm'd to be to Both an *essential thing*; and that the *Object* of *Opinion* when 'tis but humane, is said to be under a *possibility* of *Falshood*, however strong enough to exclude a *possibility* of *Doubting*; I say, considering these things, it seemeth first a *Disparagement* to the *God* whom we serve, to be asserted by his Votaries, as a Thing *Credible* rather than *Known*. Next, a *Disparagement*



deed any other than *Strongly Credible*. And whether that *Opinion* we have been taught to have of them, is really any other than *highly Probable*. And whether (by consequence unavoidable) we are not void of *All Knowledge* concerning God, however *confident* we have been, that a God there is.

§ 6. To this Objection I answer by These Degrees. First, I say, that the *Objectors* do either very much *mistake* some very learned men's *Words*, or that the learned men's *Words* are not *expressive* of their *meaning*. For how unfortunately soever some of excellent Erudition may have managed some Parts of their most excellent Design, by an *ill choice* of some *Similitudes*, and by the *wording* of their Intentions; sure I am that their *Judgements* are *sound* and *orthodox* as to the *Deity*, and withall as to the *Evidence* it carries with it. They do not any where deny that the *Godhead is demonstrable*; but say it is not a proper Subject of *Mathematical* Demonstration. Nor say they any where precisely, *The Godhead cannot be prov'd by sense*; but onely that it cannot be so *immediately*. And in such sayings as These, there is no Harm. For

§ 7. Not to insist (at this Time) on That  
*Divine*



*Divine Demonstration*, which is call'd by *S. Paul*, *The Demonstration of the Spirit*, partly made by Signs and Miracles from without, partly by immediate and supernatural Revelations, to all the Prophets of the Old Testament, and all the Apostles in the New. We have ways of *Demonstration*, which, though they are not *Mathematical*, are yet as clear, or rather clearer, and *more compulsive* of our *Assent*. And *God* may be proved even by *Sense*, *mediantibus Creaturis*, as *S. Paul* strongly argues in his first Chapter to the *Romans*. Where *the Invisible things of God from the Creation of the World* (He saith without a Contradiction) are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead. So that they (who do deny him) are without all Excuse, whether they know him, or know him not. But that They who were *Atheists* in point of *Practice*, were none at all in point of *Speculation*, the same Apostle implies by saying, *They held the Truth in unrighteousness*. (v. 18.) And *That which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath shew'd it unto them*. (v. 19.) And again, *They did not like to retain God in their Knowledge*. (v. 28.) So very hard a thing it is (in the Judgement of our Apostle) to be a *speculative Atheist*, even for one who desires

1 Cor. 2. 4.

to be so; and is unwilling to *acknowledge* what he cannot but *Know*.

§ 8. But not to put the least stress upon the Authority of *S. Paul*, which *Antiscripturists* will not allow, (and 'tis for *Their* sakes especially that I am saln on This Subject,) I shall Secondly prove by Reason, touching the *Being of a Deity*, not onely that we are furnish'd with *as much Evidence* of its Truth, as *such a thing is capable of*; but that 'tis *capable* of as much Evidence, as the *light* we see, and see by, or rather *more*. For as a *mental Demonstration* is more *cogently* convincing to any Skeptick, than an *Ocular*; so That which shews the *God-head* to us, is of *mental Demonstrations* the *most* convincing. For the *most cogent Demonstration* which can be made by a Logician, is that which argues from the *Cause* to the *Effect*, and is call'd with good reason *Demonstratio Potissima*. But God Almighty being the *Fountain* of All things knowable in the World, and so the *Cause* of All *Causes* which are the *Grounds* of *Demonstration*, (the effect of which is true knowledge, whose *Ratio formalis*, formal Reason is Assurance,) 'Tis plain his *Being* must carry with it so clear an *Evidence* of it self, that if we were not sure of *That*, we could be sure of *nothing*

*nothing else.* We are *much* surer of it, than of anything we can *see*, by how much the *inward* light we have is more infallible than our *outward*. For *This* may easily deceive us, and indeed so often *does*, that much Experience has taught us to *distrust* our own Eyes in several Cases, and in some to *disbelieve* them. Whereas a man's *Understanding* (of Objects adequate to it self) can never either *fail* him, or be *suspected*; because 'tis an *Eye* whose *Sight is Knowledge*. And *Knowledge* (properly so call'd) is so *infallible* in its nature, that *without* infallibility it cannot possibly be *Knowledge*, but must needs be somewhat else; a shrewd *Conjecture*, or strong *Belief*, an obstinate *Confidence*, or *Presumption*; each of which is true or false, as it is well or ill grounded. Whereas to *Knowledge* as it is *Knowledge*, *Infallibility* is *essential*. Shall I make the Case clear, and undeniable by an Example? We know a man having been *blind* from his very Birth, may have as *absolute* a *knowledge* that 5 and 5 do make 10, as the best Ey'd *Lynceus*. And a man the most *illiterate* is as far from being able to be *deceiv'd* in this point, as one of the greatest *Erudition*, or deepest *Reach*. Which strongly vindicates our Apostle from the possible Re-

Rom. I. 10.

Heb. 11. 27.

\* Sunt qui  
negant Spiri-  
tum esse ul-  
lum, aut om-  
nino quic-  
quam præter  
ea quæ sensu  
percipimus.  
Maffei  
Hist. Ind.  
p. 431.

proach of a Contradiction, when he says, *Things invisible are clearly seen*; and that *Moses saw him who is invisible*. For God's Existence, though *invisible* to the *Eye of the Body*, is yet to That of the *Soul* most *clearly seen*; even as clearly as the Assertion that 5 and 5 do make 10 is *ascertain'd* to a man *without Eyes or Learning*. Not at all seen by the light *without*, but so much the more by the light *within* him. The Learned and the Illiterate, the Blind and the Quick-sighted, are very equally undeceivable in these Particulars. And therefore when 'tis said by the pert and dull Scoffer, (as pert and dull as the *Japonians* of the *Jenxuan* Hæresie,) \* that *He is too foolish who thinks he knows any thing he cannot see*; and *He too credulous, who is able to believe what he cannot reach*; He may be presently made *asham'd* of his *Understanding*, by an argument *ad hominem*; that He is void of all Reason, and can have *no Soul* within him, (much less a *rational*;) because he neither can *see* it, nor can it possibly be *seen*. So 'tis an Argument to the Scoffer beyond all Answer, that *nothing* by nature can be *more* excellent than a *Beast*, because a *Beast* cannot *reach* it, or *comprehend* how it should be. There have been some in all Ages, whose shamefull Ambition

Ambition it has been to make their Ignorance Monumental. *Hercules* by his Pillars, with a *Nihil plus ultra* inscrib'd upon them, and Mr. *Hobs* by his Hypothesis, *that there is no Spirit at all*, (nor any thing else above the Sphere of his low Capacity,) have but built obelisks to the Memory of their most eminent Imperfections, their Incomparable *Pride*, and their Incurable *Stupidity*. The man is fitter to be *despis'd*, than to be sadly *disputed with*, who takes his narrow *Understanding* to be commensurate with the *Universe*, and the adequate *Standard of all Existence*; who will have *All* to be but *Fiction*, which is to *Him Incomprehensible*; and nothing really to *exist*, which is above or beyond his Soul's *Horizon*. He is worthier of our pity, whose perfect ignorance in Astronomy makes him ready almost to swear, *the Sun is no bigger than a Bonfire*; because the *Distance* of the *Object*, and the *Deceitfulness* of the *Organ*, do conspire Both at once to give it a *Littleness of Appearance*. 'Tis hard to say which is greater, our *uncertainty* of *some* things which we do every day see; or the *Certainty* of *other* things which cannot possibly be seen.

§ 9. Now amongst the many ways of proving a God by Demonstration, (some of which

cannot be made but to good Logicians, and very hardly if at all, in the English Tongue,) Two especially are the fittest for the Capacities of the Vulgar, whilst *unassisted* by Erudition. The *first* of which will be the *easier*, though the *second* will be more *cogent*, and more *imperative* of our *Assent*.

The *first*, and the most obvious, is à *Posteriori*, as proving the *Cause* by its *Effects*. Which is as *true* a Demonstration, and as *prevailing*, as any the *Mathematicks* pretend to; and many times more proportionable to Capacities unimprov'd, than Demonstration à *Priori*, which proves an effect by its Cause or Causes. As 'tis many times easier to prove the Tree by its Fruit, than the Fruit by its Original, the Tree that bears it. Yea there are things, as the four Elements, whose *inward Forms* are *unknown*, and therefore they cannot be demonstrated to be what they Are, but à *posteriori*: such as *Fire* by its properties of *heat*, and *light*, and *lightness*, and the like; which yet do beget as great a *Certainty* of its *Existence* and *Disposition*, as could be had if we could know the whole *Essence* of it. And thus our common Masters of Musick do know the *forces* and the *effects* of all the Musical proportions of Sound and



and *Number*, (perhaps to much better purpose than either *Froschius*, or *Gafforel*, or *Boetius* himself;) whilst yet the *Reason* of effects is a *Stranger* to them. Now that God is *demonstrable à Posteriori*, (I mean as to his *Being*, and his *Nature in Part*, which is most easily apprehended, not as to his *whole Nature*, which is indeed *incomprehensible*; and the most that we know of what it *is*, comes by our knowing what it is *not*;) is very well shewn, as by other Writers, so especially by *Cicero De Naturâ Deorum*, whom 'tis fitter to refer to, than to *Translate*, or *Epitomize*. But whosoever shall have the *Patience* (if I may not say the *Pleasure*) so to read, as to *understand* him, will confess the whole *World* to be a *Volume* so *expressive* of its *Creator*, as not to stand in any need of that his *lesser Book*, The Bible, to help it out. For if a man who shall but look on a *goodly Palace*, will rather argue that 'twas *built* by some skillfull *Architect*, than that the *Stones* by meer *Chance* (with all the rest of the *Materials*) did fall into that *order* wherein he sees them; much more, when we look on the *Sun* and *Moon*, and all the *Harmony* of Things in *Heaven and Earth*, shall we conclude them rather the *Work* of some *Invisible Contriver*, than that they are the *Blind off-spring*

off-spring of *Hap* or *Chance*. God is much better known by such *Foot-steps* of his *Divinity*, than either an *Hercules* by his *Foot*, or a *Lion* by his *Paw*, or an *Apelles* by his *Pencil*. And as my *Knowledge* that the *House* wherein I am, had a *Builder*, cannot be lessened by my *Ignorance* of the *Architect* or *Artist* by whom 'twas *built*; so my *Knowledge* and *Assurance* of the whole *World's* having a *Maker*, (and every way suitable to such a *Fabrick*;) cannot possibly be *diminish'd*, much less *dissolv'd*, or *done away*, by its *Maker's* being *Invisible* to *Carnal Eyes*. For how much *ocular Demonstrations* give place to *mental*, I shew'd before. And its Truth is yet farther confirm'd from hence; that Mr. *Hobs* his *Demonstration* of the *Quadrature of the Circle* (for which he will sooner dye a *Martyr*, than for any thing in Religion,) is by a *skilfuller* Mathematician plainly *demonstrated* to be *False*. But *This* Principle in the *Metaphysicks*, [*that of the two Parts of a Contradiction, the one must evermore be True, and the other False,*] which is the first and chief Ground of all our *Mental Demonstrations*, (most especially of the *God-head*) and every *Mental Demonstration* which is duly rais'd from it, or Necellitates an *Atheist* either to grant there is a God, or to affirm Both

Parts

Parts of a Contradiction, is so clear, and self-evident (without the help of our outward senses) that it is *cogent* even to *all*, of *all* \**Persuasions*, and has every where the Suffrage, as well of *Taught*, as of *Untaught* Reason. In-  
somuch as it cannot be quite so evident, that every *Watch* has a *Spring*, and every *Spring* a *Spring-Maker*, as that there is a *Primus Motor* of every *Mobile* in the World, and a *Principle of Being* to All that *is*. The *Proof* of what I have hitherto but *barely said* will be short, and easie. And the Way to it may thus be made.

That some Things there are which *began* to be, *Experience* tells us. And that *Nothing* can be the *Cause* of its *own* Being and Beginning, is just as Plain. For that which is not in *being*, cannot *do* or *act* any thing; and as little is it possible that it should *be* before it *is*. From whence it follows of necessity, that whatsoever *began* to be, had its *Being* and *Beginning* from somewhat else. As the *Third* from the *Second*, and the *Second* from the *First*. And because there could be nothing which could begin *before* the *First*, 'tis plain the *First* had its *Beginning* from *That* which *never* did begin. And that which *never began* at all, yet is the *Author* of *Beginning* to *All* that ever did begin, is *That*

F ff

which

\* Rom. 2. 14,  
15.

a Aristot. 7  
Phys. c. 1. &  
& Phys. c. 4.  
& 12. Meta-  
phys. c. 29.  
Plato 10. de  
Legibus.

Confer Ber-  
nard. de Con-  
sid. l. 3. c. 6.

which in *English* we do commonly call *God*. *God* the shortest and the fittest of any Appellative we can use in our *English Tongue*. Not that *This* or any *Name* can ever express his whole *Nature*; (for some of the *Greeks* express'd him fitly by τὸ Ἀνεξπράγματον, The *Unexpressible*, and *Moses* more fitly by *I Am That I Am*, or that stupendous *Tetragrammaton*, the Lord *Jehovah*,) but as safer and less improper, than *Anima Mundi*, *Mens Divina*, *Natura Naturans*, and the like, by which the *Peripateticks*, and *Platonists*, and from These the *Rosicrucians*, have laid a *Stumbling-block* in the *Way* of *Themselves* and others.

Now because it does imply the first and worst of *Contradictions*, for *That Being not to be*, or *Not to have been without Beginning*, which gave a *Being and Beginning* to That which *first began to be*; therefore for any one to affirm, *There is no God*, or *no Eternal Cause of Being* to All that ever *began to be*, is to affirm *Both Parts* of a *Contradiction*. Although, in spite of *Himself*, and his own *Perverseness*, (if he is but an *Animal indued with Reason*, and not a prodigious sort of *Monster in the meer likeness of a Man*,) he must confess the one is *True*, and the other *False*. This is a *mental and metaphysical*

*physical* Demonstration, more compulsively convincing than any *Ocular*. It being Impossible to be True, *that any thing is in Being, and Not in Being at the same Instant*; as 'tis Impossible to be False, *that every thing* (at the same Instant) *is either in Being, or Not in Being*.

These are things of such *self-evidence*, and so *compulsive of Assent*, that (as I said a little before) they have every where the suffrage as well of *taught* as of *untaught* Reason. And This I take to be such a *Proof* or *Demonstration* of *The Deity*, as it is sufficient to convert even an *Acataleptick*, who holds that *nothing is to be known*, but that *a man does know nothing*. Nor does it nakedly *perswade*, but irresistably *compel*, and *constrain* the Atheist. I do not speak onely with *Confidence*, but do *Know* what I say but an *old Experience*.

§ 10. Again, we *know* whom we have believ'd, by some of the *meanest* Creatures acting above the Sphere of their Activity. For all things acting *above themselves*, and with more force or vertue than other things of their Level are of *themselves* able to do, must needs derive such power and virtue from *somewhat else* which is *above* them. As when *Balaam's Ass spake, and rebuk'd her Rider*; 'twas so *commanding* a

*Demonstration* of an Agent *supernatural*, working *in*, and *upon*, and *above* the *As*s, that He who will not grant the later, must (in spite of himself) deny the former. Which because an *Antiscripturist* may gladly do, we are to instance in other Things, whereof (not his *Reading*, but) his downright *Experience* will best convince him. The Case may be usefully represented in the vast difference which we observe between a *Marble*, and a *Loadstone*. We find the *Marble* has nothing in it above the Nature of a *Stone*. It is as *dull*, as it is *heavy*; and as *unactive*, as it is *lifeless*. Whereas the *Loadstone* acts clearly *above* the nature of a *Stone*, or a Thing *Inanimate*, in drawing *Iron* as it does, an *heavier* Body than Itself, and that without a *Touch* or *Contact*, (so little need has it of Hands and Arms,) and This by way of *Discretion* too, with a *discriminating Love* to That Course Metal above All others. This, and the other Consideration, that a *Needle* touch'd with it has a particular Inclination to stand full Northward, in which Point onely it is *at rest*, and ever *restless* in any other, moved *Thales Milesius*, (the Wisest man in all *Greece*) to believe it *Animate*. And indeed he might have thought it, not onely *Animate*, but *Sensible*, nor onely *Sensible*, but *Rational*,



tional, had not his *Knowledge* of a *Deity* (showing his *Wisdom* in the most *stupid*, as well as his *Power irresistible* in the *weakest* and the *most passive* of all his *Creatures*,) superseded the necessity of that *Conjecture*. To which I add, that nothing *speaks* a God lowder, or more distinctly, than such a *speechless* sort of *Creatures* as *Birds* and *Bees*, whose *unlearned* kind of *Science* and skill in *Architecture* or *Tacticks*, the learnedst Artist in the World can onely *imitate*, never *equal*, and would certainly *admire*, if not *adore* too, (as not a few of the Heathens were wont to do,) did not the *Wisdom* of a *Creator* untie the Knot, and make All easy to such as own him. Not to ask *one* of all the *Quæres* we find in *Job*, (which yet are all argumentative, and plead the Cause I have in hand,) who but *God* can teach the *Emmet*, either to *treasure up* store of *Corn* for a Provision in the Winter, or (which is very much stranger) to *gnaw off* each little *prolifick* particle of the *Grain*, whereby it may keep *without growing*, in the most pregnant and *fertil Earth*? Shall we say such *Thaumaturgicks*, as the *Loadstone*, and the *Bees*, the *Emmet*, and the *Silkworm*, are all *αὐτοδίδακτοι*, or *Self-Instructors*, in the exercise of the *Arts* and *Curiosities* they exert? If not so, it must

Job 38. 39.  
40, 41.

be Thus ; that acting All, as they do, *above* the Sphere of their Activity, and *beyond* the low Rank they are placed in, they are clearly, *Οὐκ ὀρατοί*, All taught of God. For where there is *Art without Knowledge*, eminent *Skill without Learning*, unerring *Sight without Eyes or Vision*, incomparable *Providence without all Forecast*, wonderfull *Wisedom and Contrivance* without the inherence and use of Reason, ( as in the *Bee*, the *Loadstone*, the *Emmet*, and the *Silkworm*, ) There we have a *Demonstration* of a Superiour, Invisible, Supernatural Agent, working in, and upon, and above the Creatures, as 'twere on purpose to convince us, *that he is God*. And truly till we are able to give a tolerable reason, ( from Art, or Nature, ) why some dull and dead *Specificks* do work with *Discretion*, and out of *Choice*, upon a *determinate* Part or Humor in the Body of man, and lets the rest all alone, ( as 'twere by a wilfull *Preterition*, ) as why *Rhubard* purges *Choler*, *Hellebore* *Melancholy*, *Senna* *Flegm*, *Hermodactyls* *Viscosity*; or why *Cantharides* are offensive in particular to the *Kidneys*, *Mercury* to the *Throat*, *Stramonium* to the *Brain*, *Opium* to the *Nerves* throughout the whole Body ; I say, till we are able to give Another Cause or Reason of These astonishing

ing Effects, I shall conclude that These Things have These Discretions onely from God; and that the *Physicians* were *Enthusiasts*, to whom These Secrets were first reveal'd.

§ 11. To sum up all in a word, (and to dismiss the first Method of demonstrating the Cause of all other Causes by his Effects;) from that virtue in the Hen which is derived to the Egge, and is the Principle of Essence to the yet *unform'd* Chicken, whilst it is *not a Spirit*, and yet *Invisible*, our excellent *Harvey* strongly argues the strict *Necessity* of a God, for whom alone it is not difficult to *create* out of Nothing the Things that *Are*. And in the same Book *de Generatione*, (to the reading of which 'twill be sufficient to referr our modern Doaters upon *Experiment*;) he says, *Generatio Demonstrat Spiritum, eumque Deum*. He means a logical Demonstration à *posteriori*; such as is That of an *Artificer* from any *Artifice* he exerts. Which does carry along with it so clear an Evidence of its Author, that a *Watchmaker* is said to *move* the *Watch* which he has *made*, at the greatest *distance*: in as much as with his *Hands* and other *Instruments* of working, (as truly *informed* by his *Hands*, as his *Hands* by his *Head*, and his *Head* by his *Intelligence*, and his *Intelligence* by

by the *Fountain* of its *Existence*,) he gave his Watch as well the *Laws*, as the *Necessity* of its Motion.

§ 12. The Second general Method of *Demonstrating* the Object and Ground of Worship, whereby we *Know* whom we believe, (as to his *Entity* or *Existence*, and as to *part* of his *Nature* too,) is like to That which God made to demonstrate the *Being* of the *Sun*. For as the Sun is best seen by the *light* it gives us, and even *obtrudes* upon our *Senses*, without the least aid from either the *Mathematicks*, or *Logick*, or from the *Metaphysicks*, or *Physicks*; so *God himself*, as to his *Being*, (though not as to all his *Mysterious Essence*,) is most clearly *apprehended*, and *unavoidably understood*, (without any assistance either from Art, or Education,) by the \*ordinary *Light* and *Law* of *Nature*. Man's *knowledge* of a *Godhead* has been ever just as *natural*, as his knowledge that he has *Eyes*, (without the help of a *Reflexion* from any Looking-glass whatsoever,) though he cannot either *see* them, or make them able to *see themselves*, unless it be by *Reflexion*, which yet does not *make*, but onely *illustrate* and *prove his knowledge*. Hence it is that *All Nations*, in *All Times* and *Places*, whether *Salvage*, or *Civiliz'd*,

\* Justin. in  
Resp. ad  
Quæst. 1.  
Damasce-  
nus 1. fid.  
Orth. c. 1.  
& 3.  
Cic. Orat.  
pro Milone.

*Civiliz'd*, however tempted by the Devil to love and cherish Dissentions, and especially to affect a Singularity in Opinions, Though they have evermore differ'd in mo't things else, and even in the choice of the Go.'s they Worship'd; yet that a Deity there is, They have not been able but to agree. Τὸν Θεὸν εἶναι, *solus est Sermo universalis*. That there is above Nature a Divine Object of Worship and Adoration, is the one language of all the World: The onely Universal Character, stamp'd in every man's Heart and Head, who is perfectly a Man, and not a Monster; as He must needs be a Monster, who has no Reason; and much more He, who has no Religion. Thus is one single Error the Confutation of Another. The Sin and Error of Idolatry does refell the Worse Error and Sin of Atheism. It's observable of the Athenians, (in the Times of S. Paul,) that knowing nothing of the True God, but that a True God there is; and Knowing withall they knew him not, as to the Perfections of his Nature; erected an Altar with This Inscription, ἀγνώστῳ Θεῷ, *To the Unknown God*. Two things I here mark to my present purpose. First, that the God whom they knew not, and yet ador'd, was indeed the True God, even the same that S. Paul had de-

Nulla Gens tam barbara, quæ non fateatur esse aliquem Deum. Cic. 1. Tuscul. Qu. πᾶντες ποιεῖ θεὸν ἔχουσι ἑσθλὸν δὲ. Aristot. 1. de Cælo. r. 22. V. Jamblicum in pr. de Myst. Ægypt. & Julianum apud Cyrill. l. 2.

Act. 17. 23.

clared to them. Next that the God whom they knew not, and could not know, as to his *Essence*, They had a *True knowledge of*, and could not but know, as to his *Being*. Which is evinced and presupposed and inferred even from hence, that they did seriously, and zealously, though *blindly worship* him. All which as an *Historian*, (rather than as a *Preacher*,) and as a *matter of Fact* our Apostle told them.

§ 13. From hence it follows that *Those Athenians* who were the Ancestors of *These*, did shew themselves to be a *wise and religious* People, in that they offer'd by Proclamation a Talent of Silver for a Reward, to any Person who should be so happy and such a Lover of Religion, as to kill the foul Monster, *Diagoras the Atheist*, newly fled out of *Attica* for fear of Justice. Nor had they onely such an hatred of a *positive Atheist*, whose profession of Atheism gave him *Atheos*, for his *Name*; but they were as much admired for their Piety and Prudence, in that they *banished Protagoras*, and *burn'd* his *Books*, and this for no other reason than that he *clancularly worship'd*, and writ but *doubtfully* of a *Deity*; as if it were a *moot point*, whether there were any such thing, or no.

For

Διαγόρας ὁ  
κληθεὶς Ἀ-  
θεός, δια-  
βολῆς τυχεύων  
ἐπ' αὐτοῦ  
ἐβουλόμην  
ἄν τι  
Ἀπικῆς. οἱ  
δὲ Ἀθηναῖοι  
τὸ ἀνελόντι  
διαγόραν ἀρ-  
γυρεῖν τάλαν-  
τον ἐπέκλουν.  
Ξαν. Diodor.  
Sic. l. 13.  
p. 137.



For to be *doubtfull* of a Deity, (and not to say *I know* whom I have believ'd,) I do suppose to be the utmost that the *Affecters of Atheism* have been able to arrive at by all their Arts; whether tending to *extinguish the natural light* of the Understanding, or to the making of the *Conscience so tough and callous* by vicious habits of Debauch, as to justify and commend *S. Paul's* exprellion of the Thing, when he saith, that *some Consciences are cauteriz'd*; they are so *sear'd with an hot Iron*, as to become quite *insensate, and past all feeling*. I say, the thing we call *Atheism* I conceive to be no more than a meer *Doubting of a Deity*; not at all a presumption that 'tis *impossible* for it to be. For *Protagoras Himself*, and the *Magicians* who had debauch'd him, (brought by *Xerxes* into *Greece*,) did *privately* offer Sacrifice to certain Gods whom they ador'd, however they were in publick too *brave* to own it, because they *scorn'd* to have it thought by their *dull Admirers*, that any *Deity* did assist them in whatsoever they could do above other men. Now this *Doubting of a Deity*, implying a Deity to be *Possible*, (and that for any thing they know, it either may, or may not be,) does accidentally *demonstrate* that a *Deity* there *is*, and that it cannot

but be. For seeing to *doubt* it, is to *acknowledge* that it is *Possible* for it to be, (though not that it is *Actual*;) and seeing the *Sense* of the word *Deity* is a *Necessary Being*, altogether independent and antecedent to all *Causality*, (which an *Atheist* will grant It *must* be, if 'tis at all,) it does imply a *contradiction*, to grant that it is *Possible*, and yet to *deny* that it is *Actual*; because to be *Possible*, but yet not *Actual*, is to be perfectly *contingent*; which for a *Deity* to be, and yet be a *Necessary Being*, is a most gross *Contradiction in Adjectio*. And a gross *Contradiction* being the *only* way of proving any *absolute Impossibility*, is therefore *one* way of proving the *Actual Being* of a *God*, upon a naked confession that 'tis but *Possible* for it to be. Which confession any *Atheist* will much rather make, than undertake the harder Task, of proving a *Godhead* to be *impossible*. And yet 'tis That he *must* do, or else be convinced there *is* a *God*, by his previous Conviction that one there *may* be.

§ 14. The *Atheist's Sanctuary* and *Refuge*, to which he makes his last flight from the *Necessity* of a *Godhead*, (as the *Fountain* of *Existence* to all good things which *began* to be,) is an *eternal Succession of Individuals*. Which, how-

however he cannot *prove*, or *perform* any thing like it, he is resolv'd to take for granted, to supersede (if it were possible) the *strict Necessity* of a *Creator*. But This objection has been so baff'd, and put so quite out of all Countenance, by *Paulus Venetus*, and \*others, whose Argument leads it clearly to This *Absurdity* which it incurs, that a *Part must of necessity be equal to the whole* upon that *Hypothesis*; that I shall say no more of it than briefly This. That on the supposal of an *eternal Succession of Days*, there must be a *Medium Metaphysicum* between the *Two Eternities*, the one *before*, the other *after every Noon*; because the Noon of *this day*, (or of *yesterday*, or of the *morrow*,) cannot be *more or less* distant from that which *never did begin*, than from That which shall *never end*. Which infers an *Æquidistance* (in a *negative* way of Speaking) 'twixt *two Durations ætternal*, though not (in a *positive*) 'twixt *two Extremes*.

But I add, that the *Objection* confutes *it self*; in that the *Succession of Individuals*, by the way of *Generation* in which we find it, affords a controuling *Demonstration* of its *Æternity's* being *Impossible*; and does not need any such *subtilty*, as is required in the management of

\* Amongst and above others, I mean the most acute and the most learned Dr. Gunning, now my Lord Bishop of Ely, Paulus Venetus and others, Mr. Latham in his Sermon upon Rom. 1. 20. p. 345.

the Argument foregoing. For, (to instance in the Succession of the *Hen* and the *Egg*,) we cannot say that the *Hen* did *lay* the *Egg*, and that the *Egg* was *hatched* into the *Hen*, and so backwards to all *Æternity*; because the *Hen* (as a Parent) is by nature *before* the *Egg*; the former being the *Cause*, whereof the later is the *Effect*. From whence 'tis evident, that there was a *First Hen*; which being absolutely *impossible* to have been by *Generation*, it cannot but be, that it was *created*. And That which did *create* it, must needs be *God*.

§ 15. Having thus far proceeded in solving the *first* of the three Quæres, *How, and Why* we are said to *Know God, even as perfectly and as plainly as any thing Knowable can be Known*; I cannot choole but charge the *Atheist* with arrant *Dulness* and *Stupidity*, (however he may pass for a Man of *great Wit*, with such as having *none at all* are unfit to judge of it,) for being able to make a *Doubt* in so clear a Case. Whereby he may seem to have *too much*, and *too little* Subtilty; because if he had *less*, he would not *start* any Objections against his Maker; and if he had *more*, he would be able to *refute* them. But because, though we do *Know* whom we have believed, we do also *Believe* whom

whom we truly *Know*, it remains that I proceed to the *Second Quære* which I propos'd ; How and Why our bare *Believing* the *hidden things* of our God ( however in the Scriptures revealed to us ) is much more *proper*, and more *requir'd*, and more *rewardable* in Religion, than our *clear* and full *Knowledge* of his *Existence*.

§ 16. In order to the resolving of This *Second Quære*, I must *distinguish* more fully than in my Answer to the First, betwixt the *Mysteries* in Religion, or its Subject in *Hypothesis*, and what in *Theſis* is the *Ground* and the *Object* of it. There are matters in *Religion*, as well as *Nature*, which are most worthy of our *Belief*, though much above the flight of our *Comprehension*. And though evidently *credible*, are not *evidently True*, how *True* soever in *Themselves*. They have *evidence* enough to require our *Faith*, though not enough to beget our *Knowledge*. Thus the *Trinity in Unity* is as evident *in it self*, as the *Godhead* is ; but *not* so evident unto *us*. And humane *Faith* may be so *strong*, as to exclude from the *Agent* all kind of *doubting* ; though not from *All Objects* a *Possibility* that they are *false*. For nothing can exclude This, but *Knowledge properly so call'd*, to which a *Certainty*,

*tainty* is as essential, as *Credibility* is to *Faith*. And the absolute *impossibility* that the *Mysteries* of God should admit of *falsehood*, ariseth only from the *Verity* and *Veracity* of the *Godhead*, not from the *steadiness*, or the *strength*, much less from the *Nature* of our *Belief*. But there are *other* things in Religion, which, though they are not *more True* than the *Trinity* in *Unity*, are yet for all that *more Truly Known*. Thus the Evidence I have of *God's Existence*, is so much greater than my Evidence of his being *Three in one*, or the Scriptures being his *Word*; that I am certain of the *former*, because I *know* it; and I *doubt not* of the *later*, because I *stedfastly believe* it. My *Affurance* of the *one* makes me *infallible* in my assent, which I cannot say I am through my *Confidence* of the *other*, unless I have it by a *miraculous* and *immediate Illumination*, as fully as the Apostles their *Gift of Tongues*. Thus the Ground of the Difference of the things spoken of in our Religion, is the Difference of the Ground upon which they stand; to wit, a *greater*, or *lesser Evidence* to our short sighted Souls; not a *greater* or *lesser Truth*, and *Reality* of their *Beings*. For neither our *Knowledge* nor our *Belief* have any influence on the Things we *Believe* or *Know*.



§ 17. This Distinction being premis'd, I proceed thus to *argue*, and thereby to *answer* the Quære made. Every man's *Understanding* is too too sawcy with his *Will*, in pretending it is its *Priviledge* to give a judgement *universally* of *Truth* and *Falshood*, an Error not the less grievous for its having been occasion'd by a very great Truth. For though 'tis the *office* of the *Intellect*, in the *Intellect's* own *Court*, to pass a verdict upon Things within its *Cognizance*; yet in such *Transcendentals* as are very much *without* and *above* its *verge*, or by a natural Right and Title *beyond* all *humane Comprehension*, a good understanding will confess, It must not *determine*, but *obey*. For to *know* things exactly does onely denominate us *Learned*, but not *Religious*: good *Philosophers* indeed, but not good *Men*. The word [Religion] and the *Thing*, being well consider'd, (as 'tis by few, and but seldom,) Its *ratio formalis* will be found, not to stand in proud *Knowledge*, but meek *Obedience*. And in Obedience of the *whole Man*; as well of the *Soul*, as of the *Body*. And in the *Soul* too, we owe an *absolute Obedience* of *all* our Faculties to *God*, of our *Appetites*, our *Wills*, our *Understandings*. *Science* and *Religion* do herein differ more espe-

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cially,

1 Tim. 3. 16.

cially, that in the *first* our Understandings direct the Will; but in the *second* they concur in *submission* with it; in *That* our Reason may *command*, as a proud *Dictatrix*; but in *This* she must *obey*, as a most Teachable *Disciple*. And for *This* there is very great reason. For 'tis so *natural* to Religion, to have its *Mysteries*; or Objects *peculiar* to *Faith alone*; that neither the *Greeks* nor the *Barbarians* could ever indure to be *without* them. And if there are few *Mechanick Arts* which have not their *Mysteries* and *Secrets*, unknown to All who are not *Artists*; what an *unnatural* thing were it, if the *Mystery of Godlineß*, *God manifest in the Flesh*, or the Religion of the *True God* who is *Incomprehensible*, should have nothing contained in it beyond the *fathom* or *flight* of a *finite reason*? *What man knows the things of a man, save the Spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.* 1 Cor. 2. 11. And truly if it were otherwise, where were the *Merit*, or the *Mystery*, or the *Necessity of Believing*, on which so great a stress in Scripture is every where laid by our *Lord Himself*? We find in our Gospel these two rational Expressions, *The Obedience of Faith*, (Rom. 16. 26.) and the *Law of Faith*.

(Rom.

(Rom. 3. 27.) 'Tis the *Obedience* of our *Faith* which is so *pleasing* unto God, as that *without* This it is *impossible for us to please Him*. (Heb. 11. 6.) If *Faith* it self were not *Obedience* unto That which is called *the Law of Faith*, and to the *Lawgiver* himself who hath *commanded* us to *Believe*, It would not be so *meritorious*, or so *rewardable* in its Nature, as now it is. For herein chiefly does consist the excellent Nature of *Religion*, and of all *religious Worship*, ( and withall the rationability of the immensity of our *Reward*,) that 'tis attended with *Self-denial*, and a *Resignedness* of the All that is most excellent in our Souls, unto the *Will* of that *Object* we thus *adore*. Whereas if we absolutely *Knew* whatsoever by our *Religion* we are obliged to *Acknowledge*, or were we obliged to acknowledge what we *see* or *feel* onely; there could not be possibly such a Thing as *real Virtue* in our *Assent*, when 'twould be *impossible not to assent* to what we should distinctly *Know*, and as *impossible not to acknowledge* what with our brutish and common Senses we *see*, or *feel*. Necessity and Virtue are incompatible in All, but in *God Himself*. And even in *Him* (speaking *independently*) they differ too. Our *Knowledge* indeed may be call'd a *Physicall*, but not a *religious*, or

*moral* Virtue. There are Virtues indeed which do lead to Knowledge; and Knowledge (truly so call'd) does *dispose* to Virtues. But naked *Science* is a meer *Intellectual Habit*, (wherein the Devils themselves excel,) and was never yet reckon'd an *Ethick* Virtue. The reason of all which is plain, and obvious. For the *Object* of a Man's *Knowledge* does *compel* his assent; whereas the *Object* of his Faith does but *invite* it. To matters of *Faith* our *Assent* is *due*; but to matters of *Knowledge* 'tis *unavoidable*. Our *Knowledge* shews onely we are *intelligent* in our nature; but our *Faith* shews in us also the Grace of *Meekness*. That indeed infers the *Conspicuity* of the *Object*; but This (which is *more*) the *Flexibility* of the *Will*. (To sum up the difference in a word,) by light of *knowledge* it appears that we are a reasoning sort of Creatures; but by the Obedience of our *Faith*, that we are *Religious* ones.

§ 18. From these Premises I infer, we ought not to trouble our selves at all, that we *cannot* fully *Know*, so far forth as we *can* Believe. For God has *given* us *knowledge enough* (if we live not up to it) to *greaten* our future *Condemnation*; and the *knowledge* which He *denies* us is not *necessary* at all to our *future safety*. And seeing

seeing 'tis one of God's *Attributes*, to be by Nature *Incomprehensible*, (who were he not so, could not be God,) 'Tis fit the *learnedst* of his Creatures should be contentedly in the *Dark*, as to many things; the firm *Belief* of which things they stick not to *testifie* with their *Blood*. If we believe the *Will* of God to be revealed in his *Word*, and therein the *Three Subsistences* in but *one* and the *same Substance*, we may not be vexed with the *Experience*, of our being yet *unqualify'd* to *comprehend* how it should be. For whatsoever things they are we are commanded but to *Believe*, it cannot possibly be a *Sin*, nor to be able to *know exactly*. But 'tis a *\*Sin* to be *disquieted*, that the *sublimest* Things of God do exceed our *Reach*; and that whilst we are *finite*, *Infinite* Things will be *above* us. To *comprehend* what is *finite*, a finite Intellect is sufficient; and as sufficient also it is, to *Apprehend* what is *Infinite*, though not at all to *comprehend* it; (so great and wide the difference is between an *Apprehensive* and a *Comprehensive* knowledge; but an *Adequate* knowledge of God, is onely competent to God. As for *Certainty* and *Knowledge*, God has wisely dealt to us such fit Proportions, that we have Ground enough given us in God's own Word, to want with *comfort* what we have

\*Vix sibi  
temperant,  
quicunque  
impudentia  
provehantur,  
ut Naturam  
odeant quod  
infra Deum  
sunt. Sen. de  
Benef. l. 3. 29.

not ; and to injoy what we have, with Moderation. 'Tis there we are assured of a threefold *ἡμεῶν ἰσχυρὰ*, or Full assurance. A Full assurance of Faith, (Heb. 10. 22.) A Full assurance of Hope, (Heb. 6. 11.) A Full assurance of Understanding, (Col. 2. 2.) The last imports a full Knowledge of what is Knowable in God, and fit or good for us to Know ; which leads us on to an \* Acknowledgement of the Mysteries of God, in whom are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge. And this does prompt me to observe S. Paul's Distinction, between *τὰ γνωστὰ*, and *τὰ ἀκινεργετὰ τῷ Θεῷ*, the Things of God which may be known, (Rom. 1. 19.) and the other Things of God which are Hidden from us, (Col. 2. 3.) As for God's Existence from everlasting to everlasting, his omnipresence, his omnipotence, his all-sufficiency, and his omniscience, his Truth, and Justice, his Love, and Goodness, and the like ; in respect of all These, we perfectly Know whom we Believe. We have (literally speaking) a Full assurance of Understanding. But for the Trinity of Persons, the Incarnation of God the Son, his Circumcision, his Crucifixion, his Satisfaction for all our Sins, the Resurrection of our Bodies, and Immortality of our Souls ; in respect of all These, we rather Believe whom we have known.

\* *ibid.*



known. We have in These a *Full assurance* of *Faith*, and *Hope* onely. And the *perfection* of our *knowing* the things of God *which may be known*, is Ground enough for our *Believing* the things of God which are *Hidden* from us.

§ 19. Of what has hitherto been said, *Two* good *Uses* may here be made. The one of *Confutation*, the other of *Comfort*. That belongs to Those men who are *affectedly Unbelievers*; This will redound unto *our selves*, when in meer humane *frailty* we sometimes *waver*. And Both together will be an *Answer* to the *Third Quære* which I propos'd, touching the *Powers*, and the *Effects*, and the *great Benefits* of *Believing*, (as well as of *knowing* whom we believe,) clearly implied in the Text by the Causal *For*, as That imports *S. Paul's Reason*, why he was not *asham'd* of the things he suffer'd. *For this Cause* (says He to *Timothy*,) *I suffer these things*. But *I am not asham'd*. οὐδὲ γὰρ, *For* I know whom I have believed.

§ 20. First, to the *Wilfull Unbeliever* who does *affect* being *Incredulous*, and casts about for all *Colours* to *nourish* the humour in himself, I shall argue Thus. That He who is so *thick-headed* as to alledge he is not *sure* there is a Life after Death, and a Day of Judgement, must

Επίτομὴ τῆς  
τοῦ ἀποστόλου  
πρὸς τὸν τιμόθεον  
ἐπιστολῆς.  
Clem. Alex.  
Strom. lib. 2.

must needs confess himself so *Du l* too, as not to be *furer* that there is *None*. And 'tis sufficient to oblige a prudent Person to live exactly, (upon the account of Prudence onely,) that a *life after Death*, and so a *Judgment*, if he does not yet fully *know* it, may happen to him for *ought he Knows*. And that *Æternity of Punishments* (as well as of *Rewards*) is barely *Possible*. And that the *Negative* is not *Demonstrable*, any more than the *Affirmative*. Yea, that the *Negative* cannot be possibly, because a *Negative*; but the *Affirmative* (as it is *such*) has a *passive power* at least (which the *Negative* has *not*) of being the *subject* of *Demonstration*. For thus the *Existence* of a *Deity* may be *demonstrated* by a Person who is of *greater Perspicuity* than the man who *Doubts* of it, though not by Him who is so *stupid*, (and in a manner so *unman'd*,) as to be *able* to make a *Doubt* in so *clear* a Case. Whereas the *Negative* to This, [*that a Deity does not exist*,] can be demonstrated by *None*, how *acute* soever; nor was ever yet *pretended* to be *Demonstrable* by *Any*. The most *insipid* of *Fools* is able to *say*, [*there is no God*;] and it can be *but said* by the *wittiest* Atheist. But (to return to That Instance which was of an Article of our *Faith*, and of *Faith alone*, to  
 wit,

wit, a Punishment *Æternal*, or a Life after Death, or a Day of Judgment; ) I say, an *Evil* which is *uncertain*, and by consequence so *contingent*, as that it *may*, or *may not* be, must be provided against in *Policy*, if not in *Conscience*, or *Religion*, by one who would not be a *Fool*, as well as an *Epicure*, or an *Atheist*. A *Lazarus* may be sent out of *Abraham's Bosom*, (though *de facto* none is,) and a *Dives* out of the Deep too, to certify *the Truth* of an *Heaven* and *Hell*, upon a supposal that such there *are*. But on a supposal that there are *not*, nor an Existence after Death, 'Tis plain that *None* can be sent to us with a Certificate that there is *None*. From whence 'tis evident that *the Believer* must needs be much on the *safest side*; because the *Object* of his *Belief* is under an evident *Possibility* of Demonstration; whereas the *Contrary* to This is flatly *Impossible* to be prov'd. Besides there is This great Difference too, that if *the Believer* is deceiv'd, he does but lose the *short pleasures* of vicious living; but if the *Incredulous* is deceiv'd, He incurs the *long Torments*, (or rather *endless*, and so *not long*,) which will be one day *the Wages* of it.

§ 21. But in dealing, as I now do, with the *obstinate Skeptick*, or the *affected Unbeliever*,

Heb. II. 1.

I onely argue from his own Principles of *car-nal Reason*, and *common Sense*. And have spoken onely of Faith as the Child of Fear, which is of the Flesh. Not a word of *That* Faith which is *the Fruit of Spirit*; and is not *acquired*, but *infus'd*; nor the product of *Art*, but a work of *Grace*. The Faith imported in my Text is of a far more sublime and transcendent Nature; and such as carried up *S. Paul* above the low sense of all his Sufferings. 'Tis no less than *the Victory which overcometh the World*. No less than *the Evidence of Things not seen*; no less than *the Substance* (that is, *the confident Expectation*) of *things hoped for*. It refresheth our drooping Spirits with unspeakable Comforts in the black and gloomy day of our greatest Trial, when all the Comforters upon Earth are utterly unable to yield us comfort. It fills us inwardly with *Joy in the Holy Ghost*. Conveys unto us a full assurance that our Pardon is seal'd, our Peace ratified, that God is our Father, and we His Children. Gives us some Glimmerings and Fore-tastes of the Glory to be reveal'd. It *presentiates* things future; and *prepossesseth* us with the Injoyment of things *invisible*. Reveals unto us, by the secret and powerfull Whispers of God's Spirit, the Bea-rifick

cifick and glorious *Mansions* prepared for us in *His House*. Hereupon it does so place us above the Level of Temptations, as to exempt us from the fear of whatsoever Men or Devils can do unto us. Insomuch that what is intended by the Enemies of our *Faith* to make us sorry, by *This* is wonderfully made to increase our Joy. By *This* we are enabled to *trust in God* (as Holy *Job* did) *although he kills us*. So that lifting up our heads, and *looking up unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our Faith*, we learn to love and to *kiss his Rod*; and are so far from repining at his severest Dispensations, that in regard unto *the Joy that is set before us*, we can enjoy the very *Torments*, and scorn the *shame* of a Crucifixion. In a word, should I *exemplifie* all I have said concerning *Faith*, by making a Narrative of Particulars, as far as from *Abel* to *Charles the First*, (which were to prove by the Argument they call *Induction* the wonderfull *Powers* and *Effects* and glorious *Benefits* of *Believing*, as well as of *Knowing* whom we believe,) I must have taken for my Text the whole *Eleventh Chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews*.

§ 22. But because *This* would prove an Enterprize too long and tedious, though not

too difficult to be perform'd ; I shall conclude with some Directions for the *securing* of our *Faith* (if at least we have *any*) from slipping from us ; and for the enabling us to say, with our Apostle in my Text, *οἶδαμεν ὅτι*, we know whom we have *trusted* ; *we Know whom we have Believed* ; and are *perswaded that He is able to keep that which we have committed unto Him against That Day.*

§ 23. If we find our selves *wavering* in the *Belief* of those Things whereof we have not a *perfect knowledge*, (however a *perfect knowledge* of *That*, which is the *Ground* of the Things *Believed*, and we have reason to *superstruct* the strongest *Belief* to be imagin'd, upon so firm a *Foundation* as *perfect Knowledge*,) we may comfort our selves, and re-inforce our *Sick Faith*, by observing these following Rules.

I. First, by reflecting on the importance of those known Words, *Lord I believe, help Thou my unbelief.* Implying an *unbelief* in one, does consist with *belief* in another measure. Just as contrary Qualities often meet in one Subject, in *gradibus remissis*, although in *gradibus intensis* they never can. Next, by making that *Confession* and *Prayer* our own. Lord, we *believe* in a degree ; but with *fears* now and then, and some

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Mar. 9. 24.

2.



some dishonourable *Faintings*. Nor of our selves can we do *more*; but That and more by *thy Help*. Help us therefore to *believe*, without the least degree of *doubting*, or *distrust*, or *diffidence*. Whatever is *wanting* in our *Belief*, we pray thee *pardon*, and *repair*, and *replenish* in us. We cannot acquire it by *Art*, or *Industry*; but we can humbly *wrestle* with thee (as *Jacob* did) for this *Blessing*, by *Prayer* and *Fasting*. And through the *Grace* which Thou hast given us, *We will never let thee go*, till thou hast *blest*'d us with a *steady unshaken Faith*. Thirdly, by considering, that *to be tempted* (however strongly) is *no Transgression*. But rather the *more* a man is tempted, and to the *staggering* of his *Faith*, the more *victorious* is his *Faith* when he does *not yield*. *Yield* we do not, whilst we *dis- sent* from our *Waverings*; and *bate* the *unsteadiness* of our *Assent*; and are heartily *griev'd* at its *Hæsitations*; and are piously *carefull* to *make* it *steady*; and *resolute* in our *Purposes* to *bold fast* our *Faith*, even in spite of those *Doubtings* we grapple with; and strive to make it so much the stronger, (the more our *Tempter* attempts its overthrow,) by the *Antiperistasis* of *Temptations*. We do not *yield*, though we are *buffeted*, (both by *Satan*, and the *Flesh*, and

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the *World* we live in,) whilst we are *obstinate* in our purpose to *serve* the God whom we own with our *Self-denials*; to *serve* him with the *Denial* of all the *Rivals* of his *Religion*; (our Wit, our Reason, our Erudition, our Profit, Pleasure, or Reputation;) and to *honour* him with the *obedience* of every *Faculty* within us; not onely with our *Wills*, but our *Understandings*, whilst we make them *sloop down*, when they cannot rise *so high* as to things above us; and the \* *rather* to believe them, (if I may use *Tertulian's* *Wd.*,) because *Impossible*. For what is *impossible* to *us*, to God is *ease*. What to *us* is *miraculous*, to *Him* is *natural*. And therefore the *Mysteries* of our Religion, (to wit, the *Trinity*, *Incarnation*, *Resurrection*, and the like,) which to the *misty* Eye of *Reason* our Tempter would make to seem *impossible*, do to the *clearer* Eye of *Faith* appear to be *True* so much the *rather*. I say, the *rather* in two respects; in respect of our *Tempter*, whose ends we *frustrate* by our Belief; and in respect of the *Things Themselves*, which do the better *become Religion* for being *above* the short Reach of our *stunted Knowledge*; and which we are *Therefore* to believe, because *unable* to *comprehend* them. For were we able to *comprehend* them (as we do many

\* Mortuus est  
Dei Filius,  
prorsus cre-  
dibile est,  
quia ineptum.  
Sepultus re-  
surrexit, cer-  
tum est, quia  
Impossibile.  
Tert. de Car-  
ne Christi.

many things *below* us,) This gross Absurdity would follow, that what is now our *Religion*, would be our *Science*. Wherein our *finite Understandings* would not humbly *submit*, but proudly *Triumph*. And it would be an *hard* thing to be *Irreligious*. The *Pelagians* of old, and our late *Socinians*, do seem to forget the vast *Distance*, and *Disproportion*, betwixt the *Faculties* of *Man*, and *hidden Mysteries* of *God*, when they contend for a *Sufficiency* in *natural reason* to *\*receive* the *\*deep things of the Spirit of God*. For as *God* being a *Spirit* must (for that very reason) be *worshipped in Spirit*, so the *spiritual* things of *God* must be *spiritually* discerned. There must be<sup>a</sup> *Similitude* and *Proportion* twixt *Acts* and *Objects*. Lastly, 'tis matter of *comfort* to us, and one of the means of *reinforcing* our *wavering Faith*, that what does often seem to *fail* us in *one* regard, may yet in *another* be ever with us *for* our *support*. We may with *the Father of the Faithfull*, the Faithfull *Abraham*, <sup>b</sup>*believe in Hope against Hope*. For as *He* could *not hope* for a great *Posterity*, in regard of His *Age*, and *Sarah's Barrenness*, which yet he could *not but hope for*, in regard of *God's Promise*, which could *not fail*; so, what we *cannot believe* exactly, in regard of its being

\* 1 Cor. 10.  
14.

a 1 Joh. 3.2.

b Rom. 4.18.

2 Cor. 4.8,9.

being above the Reach of our *Reason*, and common *Usages* of *Nature*; we cannot chuse but believe, in regard that *God* says it who cannot lie. The *Worthiness* of our *Faith* does stand in This chiefly, that though 'tis many times *Wavering*, like the tremulous Needle in the Mariner's Compass, yet being touch'd by *God's Grace*, as That *Needle* by the *Loadstone*, its prevalent motion is towards its *Pole*; and from *That* its Trepidations can never wrest it. Insomuch that we may say, (as once *S. Paul* in another case,) we are troubled on every side, yet not in Distress; perplex'd we are often, but not in Despair; Persecuted by *Satan*, but by *God* not forsaken; cast down indeed, but not destroy'd. Tremble we may, (like *Aristippus* in a shipwreck,) but (like Him) we are not guilty of yielding up our *Συγκατάδικος*, (as 'tis worded by *Aulus Gellius*.) We do not basely consent to our Perturbations, which arise not from our *Spirits*, but from our *Flesh*. The *Law* in our *Members* (do what we can) will still be warring; but the *Law* in our *Minds* does ever worst it. We still believe with our *Wills*; Lord, help the *Unbelief* of our *Understandings*. Our *Hearts* are steady; Lord, fix

fix our *Heads* too. In spite of our very *Unbelief* (in point of *doubt*, or *hesitation*, or now and then a *dark interval*,) We will believe, so as to *love* the *Incarnate Deity* whom we admire; and *so love*, as to *obey* him; and *obey* him to such a point, as to *lay down our lives* for the love we bear him. And so will prove by *all three*, that we do really *Believe* what we cannot fathom, [*God manifest in the Flesh*,] because *without* our *Believing*, we can do *neither*. Neither *Love*, nor *ObeY*, nor *lay down our Lives* in obedience to him. Let our *Doubtings* or *Disbelievings* (in some Degree, and by Fits,) be what they *can*; or let them *seem* to be what they *will*; yet we are *certain* of our *Faith*, whilst we are *certain* of our *Fear* to *offend* our Maker; and of our *Love* to his *Goodness*, and of our *Obedience* to his *Commands*. Without this last ('tis very true) we cannot speak *Peace* to our  *selves*, or *others*. For as *S. John* says expressly, *By This we know that we know him, if we keep his Commandments*; so 'tis the *keeping of his Commandments*, by which we *know* that we *love*, and *obey* him *truly*.

§ 24. Now having arrived at a full know-

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Est non scripta sed nata lex; quam non didicimus, accepimus, legimus, verum ex Natura ipsa arripimus, hausimus, expressimus; ad quam non docti, sed facti; non instituti, sed imbuti sumus, &c.  
Cic. Orat. pro Milone.

Heb. 11. 6.

Rom. 1. 19.

\* Eccles. 3. 21, 22.

Rom. 11. 33.

ledge of God's *Existence*, and his good-pleasure, (expressed to us in his *Precepts*,) or of his *Verity* and his *Will*, (revealed to us in his *Word*, and also engraven in our own *Nature*, as a *Law* written in our *Hearts*;) and farther yet having attained unto a *knowledge also in part* of his Glorious *Essence*; (as that he is a *Spirit*, *Existing of Himself from all Eternity*, an *omnipresent* and an *omniscient*, and a *necessary Being*, from whom, and by whom, is every Good Thing that is; and that he is a *Rewarder of Them that diligently seek him*; &c.) Having I say the satisfaction of *knowing* That which our Apostle does call τὸ γνωστὸν τῷ Θεῷ, *That which may be known of God*, which is as much as is needfull, and as much as is enough; we must not disquiet our Minds in vain, by *\*seeking out things which are too hard for us*, or by *searching after Secrets above our strength*; or by being *over-curious in unnecessary matters*; as the excellent Son of *Sirach* has very judiciously forewarn'd us. *The Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the Godhead* is the chiefest of Those *Inseparables*, which are indeed ἀνεξιχνίαστα, *past finding out*, more impossible to be traced than all his most mysterious ways, which



which our Apostle thought worthy of *This Expression*. Such a mytery it is, as the most pious, and the most learned, and most acute of all Writers were never well able to give account of. The most profound Divine Here is in the condition of *Simonides*, when demanded by *Hiero*, a definition of the Deity. The more he looks into This Mytery, by so much the *obscurer* it seems to be. The longer he considers, the *less* he is able to apprehend it. S. *John* says expressly, (and I believe him,) *There are Three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, the Holy Ghost, and These Three are One.* (1 *Joh.* 5. 7.) The Antient Fathers and Councils, to stop the Mouths of several *Hereticks*, of Two especially, *Arius* first, and then *Sabelius*, and to preserve the Christian Church from the Plague of *Schism*, found it necessary to add This Form of Words, (though not in a *positive*, but in an *exclusive* sense,) *A Trinity of Persons in an unity of the Godhead*. But if 'tis \* asked what is meant by a *Trinity of Persons*, S. *Austin* says we want words to express it by. *Dictum est tamen Tres Personæ, non ut illud diceretur, sed ne taceretur quomodo Tres sint, &c.* For who

\* Cum quaeritur, Quid Tres? magna prorsus inopia humanum laborat eloquium. August. de Trin. l. 3. cap. 19.

a Mornay de  
la Verité de  
la Religion  
chrétienne.  
c. 5. § 1. 41. b.

\* Sic est sum-  
ma essentia  
supra & ex-  
tra omnem  
aliam atu-  
ram, ut si  
quando de il-  
la dicitur al-  
iquid verbum  
quæ Commu-  
nia sunt aliis  
Naturis. sen-  
sus nullatenus  
sit Communis.  
Ansel. Mono-  
log. c. 62.

Ubi supra  
c. 85.

Poetius lib.  
de Trinitate  
& Unitate  
Dei.  
D. Fern. de  
confid. l. 5.  
c. 7. p. 897.  
878.

Marialis in  
Epist. ad  
Eudægal.  
c. 3.

can speak fitly of what is *Infinite*, and whilst he makes use of Terms, belonging onely to *finite* Things? yet This must be done, if we speak at all. <sup>a</sup> *Il en fault parler en langage humain, puisque le divin nous est incogneu.* Onely let us not forget the wise Advertisement of *Anselm*, (whensoever we so speak,) \* that if we speak concerning God in *Words* which are *Common* to other Natures, our *sense* and *meaning* must not be *Common*, but *peculiar to God alone*.

§ 25. Nor is This All. For we want understanding to apprehend the Blessed Trinity, as well as words to express it by. *Anselm's* excellent Understanding was utterly lost in This *Labyrinth*. The Understanding of *Boetius* was also drown'd in This *Ocean*. Good *S. Bernard's* Understanding was swallow'd up in This *Abyss*. From whence I easily conclude, (because I do it with humility and due submission,) that *the Trinity in Unity onely can be fathomed by it self*. And that to speak of *Three Persons*, in any acception of the word *Persons* which is in use amongst Men, (when at any time they speak of created Beings,) were to commit a grosser Hæresie, than that of the *Antitrinitarians*.

§ 26. This

§ 26. This does prompt me to go out of this long Discourse, at the very same Door at which I enter'd. A Door of Hope and Consolation, which seems to hang on These three Hinges.

First, that I *know* whom I have believed, by Knowledge properly so call'd.

Next, that I *believe* what I *cannot know*, as far as 'tis affirmed in God's own word.

Lastly, that I *contradict not* what 'tis *most difficult to believe*, (because *not written* in God's own word,) as far as I find it is agreed on by *All my Teachers*, (especially met together in *General Councils*,) as an *Act of Uniformity*, or as an *Article of Peace*.

For however I *may err*, it shall not be as an *Hæretick*, and as a *Schismatick* much less. It being the *Glory* of a Man's *Faith*, to bow down his Reason to his Religion; and the *Dignity* of his *Religion*, to study *Charity*, and *Meekness*, and Obedience to his Superiours, above some *Truths*. I say therefore with <sup>a</sup> Leo, *If I cannot explain what the Trinity is, I will not presume to say there is not a Trinity*. And with Radulphus Flaviacensis, <sup>b</sup> *If I cannot apprehend how One is Three in the propriety of their Persons, and how the same*

<sup>a</sup> Leo de passione Domini  
Serm. 12.  
<sup>b</sup> Rad. Flav.  
in Levit. l. 10.  
c. 2.

*Three are One* in the Communion of their Substance, I will not despise, or gainsay, but obey the Church. I do not mean onely the *English*, much less the *Roman*, but I mean the *Holy Catholick and Apostolick Church*, in which to believe, is the Ninth Article of my Creed. If this mystery of the *Triune* is as *Ineffable*, as *Inscrutable* by Dust and Athes, (which we are) I will content my self (with *Damascius*) to sacrifice to him my Soul in Silence; and adore him with *Dionysius*, (whether he is the *Areopagite*, or not,) <sup>c</sup> *ut Nominine vacantem*, as being said to be without, because above every Name. Neither *Jehovah*, in the singular, nor *Elohim*, in the plural, nor *Both together* conjoyn'd can sufficiently illustrate This stupendous *μεγαλειότης*, (as Divines love to call it,) This *Reciprocal Inhabitation of Three Subsistences in one another*, whereby The *Unity of the Godhead* (is rather perfected, than destroyed, and) remains Intire.

c Dionys.  
Areop. de  
divin. No-  
min. c. 1.  
p. 447.

§ 27. 'Tis plain the word *Persons* is to be taken, (not so much in a *Positive*, as) in a *Negative* sense. For that the Words of S. John [ *These Three are One* ] might be no longer misunderstood and misreported, mis-

expoun-

expounded and misapply'd, as they were by several Hereticks before the *First Nicene General Council*, And that Christians *everywhere* might speak as 'twere with *one Mouth*, (in case they could not be (*everywhere*) of *one mind*,) It seem'd good to <sup>d</sup> *That Council*, to ordain that the Word *Persons* should be apply'd in Discourse to the *Three Witnesses in Heaven*, which are but *One God*. Thereby intending, not so properly, to give us a *real knowledge* of the Mystery, as to *defend* us from *Error* in it. And above all other Errors, from those of *Heresie*, and *Schism*. Not so really to inform us what the *Three in One* are, as to preserve us from Imagining that They *are* what they are *Not*. *Not* three parts in one whole, either *Integral*, or *Essential*. *Not* three *Qualities* in one subject. *Not* three *Modes*, *Not* three *Formalities*, *Not* three *Names* of one Thing. In which *Act of Uniformity*, (as before I once call'd it,) and especially in reconciling the whole *Greek Church* unto The *Latine*, *Athanasius* and *Hosius* were the most eminently *Instrumental*. Now in the Business of *Religion*, (though not in That of meer *Philosophy*) we are in all reason to yield assent to some High Things above our reason.

Elle

d Hist. Con-  
cil. Nicani  
ex Edit. Bin.  
Tom 1. p. 322.  
& Altoni.  
Pis. l. 2. p. 383.  
& inferius  
p. 603.  
Vide etiam  
Baron. ad  
Ann. 362.

Else Religion were not Religion ; and God himself would not be God , or Man at least would not be Man , and Myſtery would not be Myſtery , if God's knowledge of Himſelf , as a *Trinity in Unity* , could poſſibly be common to Man with God. It is therefore , with Me , a prevalent Argument of His Verity , that His Nature is ſo vaſtly above the Sphere of my Comprehension. *Apprehenſive* of his Nature indeed I am ; but *comprehenſive* of it I cannot be. For whatſoever I can *fathom* , I cannot abſolutely *Adore* ; as ſeeing there are *few* of my *fellow Creatures* , whoſe Natures I can ſay I do fully *know*. If I make a Man of Wax , or a Statue of Marble , I cannot ſo truly tranſcend my *Creature* , as my *Creator* does *Me* ; becauſe between *Me* and *That* , there is *ſome* proportion ; but between my *God* and *Me* , there is *none at all*. And if my *Creature* for want of *Reason* cannot apprehend *Me* , much leſs for want of an *Omnſcience* , can I comprehend *Him*. Thus though I cannot diſcern the *Reason* , why in the *Unity* of the *Subſtance* there is a *Trinity of Subſiſtences* which I admire , yet *why* I cannot diſcern the *Reason* , I can diſcern reaſon enough ; and ( which is every whit as well



well for a finite Reason,) I find it most *reasonable* that so it should be. For exactly to know, why we cannot know exactly the things above us, is every whit as sufficient in order to our *Faith*, as any kind of *Demonstration* can be in order unto our *knowledge*. So far is any thing from *reaching* what is infinitely *above* or *beyond* it self, that *no Being* (but the *Divine*) exactly knows *its own Nature*. And even This our very *Ignorance* of God's entire *Essence* may lead us to the *knowledge of his Existence*. For as my outward Eye *sees*, but cannot *See* that it *sees*, (This later being the Work of a nobler Faculty within me,) or as a Brute does *apprehend* its proper objects, but cannot *apprehend at all* *How* or *Why* it apprehends, (for want of a power to *reflect* on its Apprehension,) so a Man indued with reason, although he *knows* many things throughly, and also knows *how* he knows them, yet *How*, or *Why*, or *by What* means he comes to *know*, that he *knows* *How* he knows, he can never tell; unless it be by *inferring*, that it comes to him from a *Superiour* and *Invisible Power*, which Power is *God's*.

§ 28. By stating thus the whole Subject

of the *Godhead* in general, and of the *Trinity* in particular, (which I have singled out as one of the highest Mysteries in our Religion, the least understood, and the most stumbled at, by such as set up meer *Science* against *Religion*, and depretiate all *Faith* in respect of *Knowledge*,) I pay my Duty both to the *Word*, and the *Church* of God. To each of these as a *Christian*; And as a *Man*, to the *Law of Nature*. I fully satisfy my *Reason*, by weighing the Nature of *Religion*: and so I make a strict Agreement between my *Reason* and my *Faith*. Nor can I better Conclude and dismiss the whole Subject, than in the sense of the devout and acute *S. Bernard*.  
 e To inquire into This *Mystery*, (he speaks of a *Critical Inquiry*,) is a *peevish Curiosity*: (and as perilous as it is peevish.) To *Believe* it in humility, as it is Worded by the Church, (which is the Pillar and Ground of Truth,) is a *Pious Belief*, and a *Safe Profession*. But to *See it as it is*, and to *know it as we are known*, is the final *Consummation of Bliss and Glory*.

e Bern. de  
 Considera-  
 tione l. 5. c. 8.

Which *God the Father* of his Mercy dispose us for, for the Merits of *God the Son*, and through

through the powerfull Operation of God the Holy Ghost.

To whom be Honour and Adoration for evermore.

F I N I S.

*Neither will the supposed, (and I fear truly supposed) greater Number of Atheists, than either Papists or Sectaries, be any hinderance to the Papists, for finally prevailing. See Dr. Sanderſon's long Preface to his Sermons in fol. §. 23.*



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## ERRATA sic corrige.

P. Ag. 85. line 22. r. *Dysasters*.

P. 106. l. 3. from the bottom, for *with* r. *by*.

P. 113. l. 2. r. *Meribibula*.

P. 154. in Marg. after l. 10. add, [*Concil. Florent. Session. 4. & deinceps. Edit. Bin. Vol. 8. à p. 580. ad p. 593.*]

P. 156. l. 6. in Marg. r. *saſſuram*.

P. 171. l. 19. dele *but*.

P. 207. l. 20. r. *peace*.

P. 214. l. 17. after *but*, del. *the seventh is set apart*.

P. 219. l. 17. for *ye*, r. *the*.

P. 220. l. 10. r. *ſtamp'd*.

P. 280. l. 3. dele *ſua deſcription & ſign*.

P. 283. l. 4. for *whereas*, r. *where*, *as*.

P. 284. l. 9. r. *Curioſity*.

P. 286. l. 11. after *of*, r. *our*.

P. 295. l. 6. from the bottom, after *are*, r. *we*.

P. 303. l. 17. after *is*, r. *yet*.

P. 312. l. 10. after *Glor*, add in the Text what is in the Margin.

P. 339. l. 8. for *Joſhua*, r. *Jeſhua*.

P. 352. l. 3. for *ſo*, r. *ſee*.

P. 356. l. 9. for *How*, r. *Now*.

P. 386. l. ult. r. *conſider*.

P. 400. l. 4. from the bottom, del. *ratio formalis*.

P. 405. l. 3. after *of*, r. *ſuch*.

P. 409. l. 12. after *as*, dele *it*.

P. 410. l. 5. after *are*, r. *therefore*.

P. 419. l. 12,13,14. in Marg. del. [*Paulus Venetus, and others.*]

P. 432. l. 5. after *of*, r. *The*.

P. 435. l. 4. after *doubting*, dele *or*.

P. 442. l. 1. dele *and*.

Ibid. l. 6. from the bottom, for *only can*, r. *can only*.

